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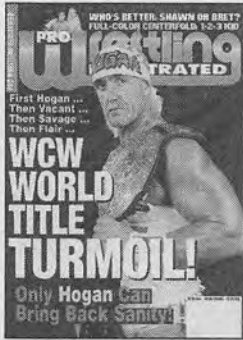
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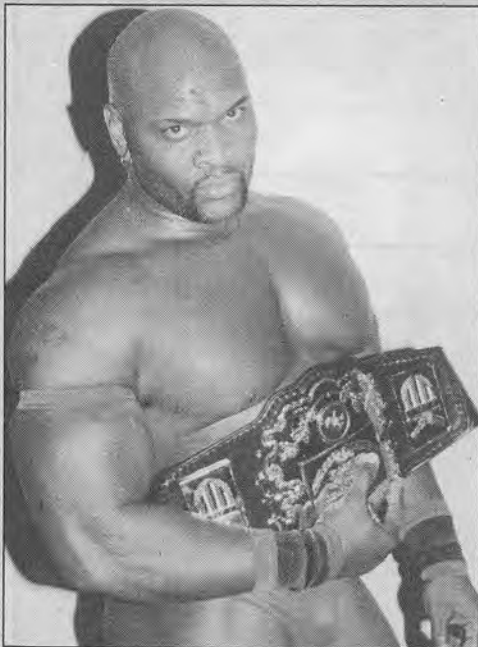




COVER PHOTO:
Bill Apter

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Alex Krasnopolsky

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see ad elsewhere in this issue).

INCENSED TO WIN



Our cover story in the February 1996 issue told of the insult that infuriated Randy Savage so much ("Give It Up, Old Man!") that he began using a more aggressive style. The more aggressive "Macho Man" went on to win the WCW World title in November. Our fans noticed the change and had plenty to say about it.

"At first I was upset that some little kid insulted 'Macho Man,'" said "PWI Hotline" caller Peter Montel of Cheyenne, Wyoming, "but when Savage won the WCW World title at World War III, hey, I forgave the kid!"

"Savage may have taken that insult to heart, but at least he did something about it," wrote reader Melaine James of Westfield, Massachusetts. "He didn't just let what someone said bother him. He turned it into something good!"

"Randy may be savage again, but how long could it possibly last?" questioned reader Reed Davis of Salisbury, Maryland. "I agree with the kid. Savage is too old to be in this game much longer."

PARDONING THE GANGSTAS

After reading "From The Desk Of ... Stuart M. Saks" in the Winter 1995 issue, I was left wondering just what The Gangstas were trying to do. It took some nerve on their part to bribe former *PWI* Editorial Assistant Ed Emelett with a car, a vacation, and \$2,000 in cash. I do not like this at all. In my estimation, it was The Gangstas themselves, not one of their associates, who bribed Mr. Emelett. And that caused him to lose his position with *PWI*.

I have heard about The Gangstas badmouthing other wrestlers. Now they pull a stunt like this. This makes me sick!

I hope that some team, like Public Enemy for instance, gives The Gangstas a *real* good whipping for bribing a *PWI* staff member just get a high spot in the "PWI 500." Then they will really learn their lesson!

WILLIAM STAMBAUGH
York, PA

[Editor's note: It was never determined that it was The Gangstas who bribed Emelett for a good position in the "PWI 500." Mustafa

Saied and New Jack were mentioned as suspects because Emelett seemed to be very friendly with them at times, but we never determined that they were involved in any way. The name of the person or persons who bribed Emelett might never be known.]

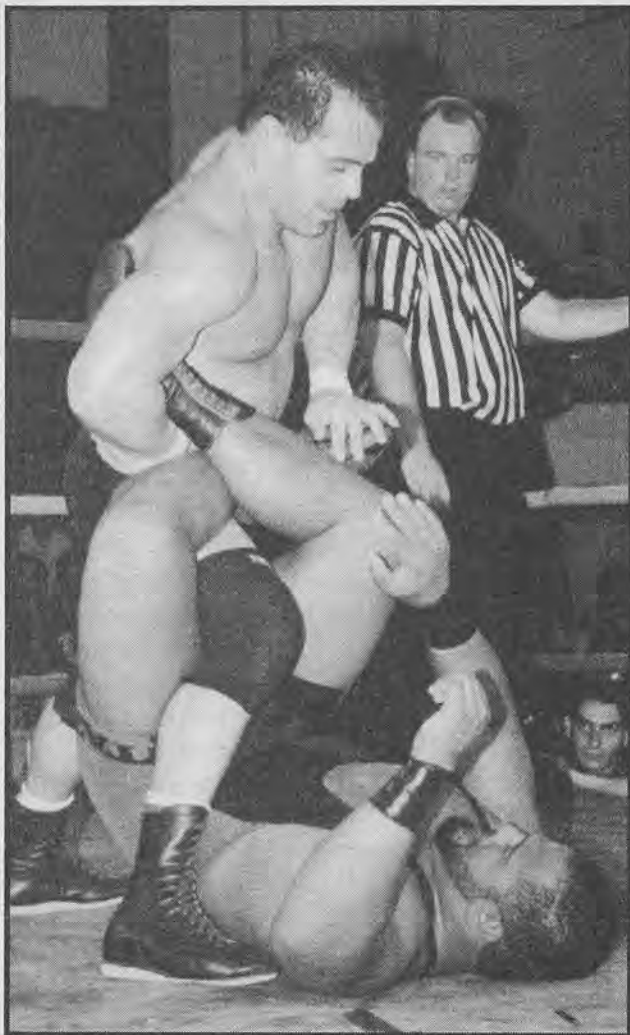
WEEKLY APPROVAL

I subscribe to *Pro Wrestling Illustrated Weekly*, and I must say I enjoy it very much. I would like to thank you for providing the



A lot of people thought it was The Gangstas who bribed former *PWI* Editorial Assistant Ed Emelett to get a good spot in the 1995 "PWI 500." Just to clarify, as of press time, we hadn't found the culprit(s).

fans with this excellent weekly newsletter. It keeps me updated with what's going on in the wrestling world. I love the latest news, gossip, and especially the transactions. I also enjoy the behind-the-scenes news, much of which is hardly ever mentioned on television by the various wrestling federations. I also find the independent federation information to be really helpful since I cannot see many of those promotions on TV or in person.



PWI listed blandness as one of Dean Malenko's main weaknesses in a recent "Scouting Report." Reader Harry Simon doesn't see how his lack of flamboyance makes him any less effective in the ring.

I have been very busy lately with school and work and haven't been able to keep up with wrestling on TV or the magazines as much as I'd like to. During this time, I found *PWI Weekly* to be very helpful. I am definitely renewing my subscription so I don't miss out.

SIDNEY KARL
San Jose, CA

STRAIGHT "SHOOTER"

Recently, I was thrilled to see a "Scouting Report" on one of my favorite wrestlers, "The Shooter" Dean Malenko (January 1996). To paraphrase *The Brain* (that's the cartoon mouse, *not* Bobby Heenan): Keep it up, *PWI*; Donkeytown needs a new mayor. You listed blandness as one of Malenko's weaknesses. Oh, silly me. Here, I thought that being the greatest mat technician and counterwrestler on the globe could overshadow a lackluster ability to kick out one-liners.

So what if Dean Malenko is the greatest wrestler from one

(Continued on page 48)

10 YEARS AGO IN PWI

The cover of the April 1986 issue featured WWF World Women's champion Wendi Richter and carried the accompanying headline, "Is Wendi Richter More Popular Than Hulk Hogan?" At the time, it was close. Her own popularity did a lot for the popularity for women's wrestling in general. After Richter lost the belt, however, the popularity of women's wrestling quickly waned.

Elsewhere in the magazine: NWA World champion "Nature Boy" Ric Flair was featured in the centerfold ... Chris Adams and Gino Hernandez' continuing war with the Von Erich family was chronicled. After having their heads shaved by the Texas wrestling family, Adams and Hernandez proclaimed, "When the Von Erichs cut our hair, they cut their own throats!" ... Before the big showdown between Dusty Rhodes and Ric Flair at Starrcade '85, the two met in a wild six-man battle, and *PWI* was there to cover it. Rhodes teamed with The Road Warriors to defeat Flair and Ole and Arn Anderson.

Magazine availability: Sold out.



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RINGSIDE

With Bill Apter

ONE OF THE men allegedly responsible for the brutal attack on **Shawn Michaels** outside a Syracuse, New York, nightclub on October 14 has been charged with second-degree assault. According to the *Syracuse Post-Standard*, **Douglas D. Griffith**, 23, a U.S. Army soldier from Canastota, New York, was arraigned in Onondaga County Court on December 6, then released into the custody of military police pending a hearing scheduled for December 14. Depending on which report you read, there were anywhere from four to 10 men involved in the October 14 incident. At first, Shawn opted not to press charges, but he changed his mind a few weeks later.

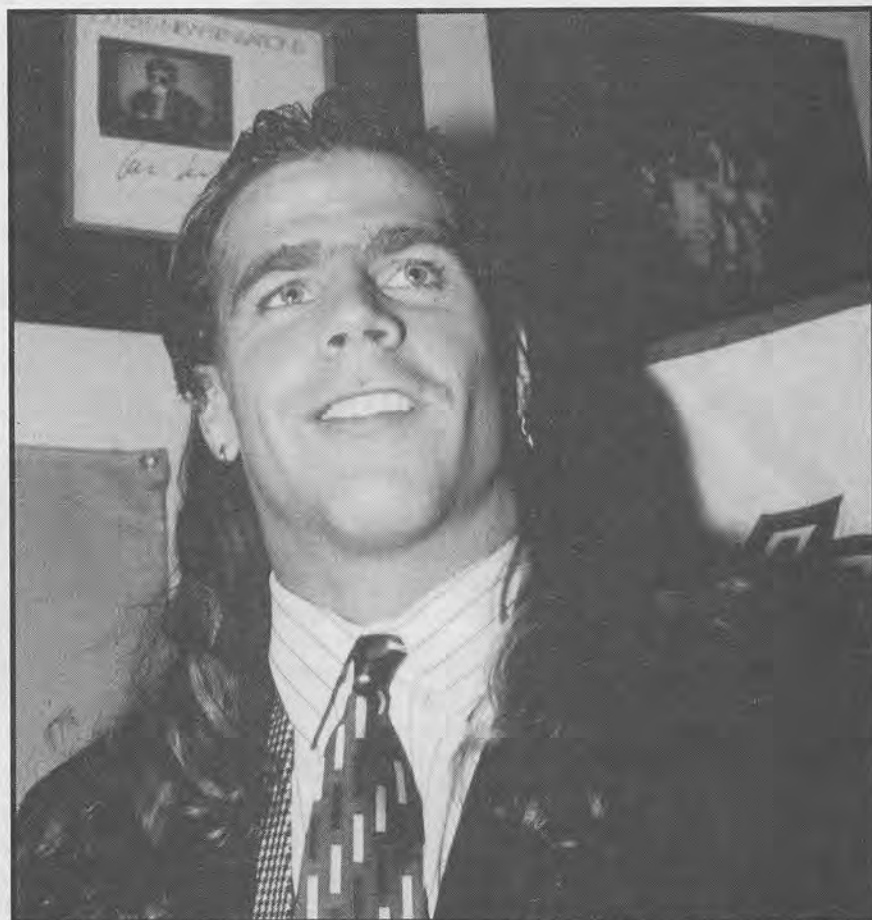
Michaels did return to the ring just three weeks after he was beaten up, but he was sent home by his doctors after collapsing in the ring during a match with **Owen Hart** on November 20. He has since been diagnosed with post-concussion syndrome, and it could be several months before he is allowed to wrestle again.

WWF President **Gorilla Monsoon** is confusing me. He'll strip some wrestlers of their titles, he'll fine others who blatantly break rules or sneak-attack their rivals, yet when **Bob Backlund** attacks broadcaster **Jim Ross**, a sound engineer, and World champ **Bret**

Hart all in the span of two days, Monsoon does practically nothing! All he did was issue a statement that said he will have Backlund arrested if he attacks any other non-wrestling employees of the WWF. Come on, Gorilla, what does this guy have to do to get suspended or banned, procure the chicken wing on you?

By the way, have you seen how chummy Bob—I mean, Mr. Backlund—has become with **Dean Douglas**. Backlund presented Douglas with the "Board Of Education" at a TV taping in November. The "Board" is a paddle similar to the ones teachers used to use on unruly students years ago (not me, of course). He may not get to use it much, though, because from what I hear, with the exception of Mr. Backlund, Douglas isn't getting along with anyone in the WWF and may have left by the time you read this.

ECW's **Taz** is a bit surly these days as well. "I don't need any friends in this sport!" he told me when I reached him by telephone recently. Well, he does have at least one friend in ECW these days—his new manager, **Bill**



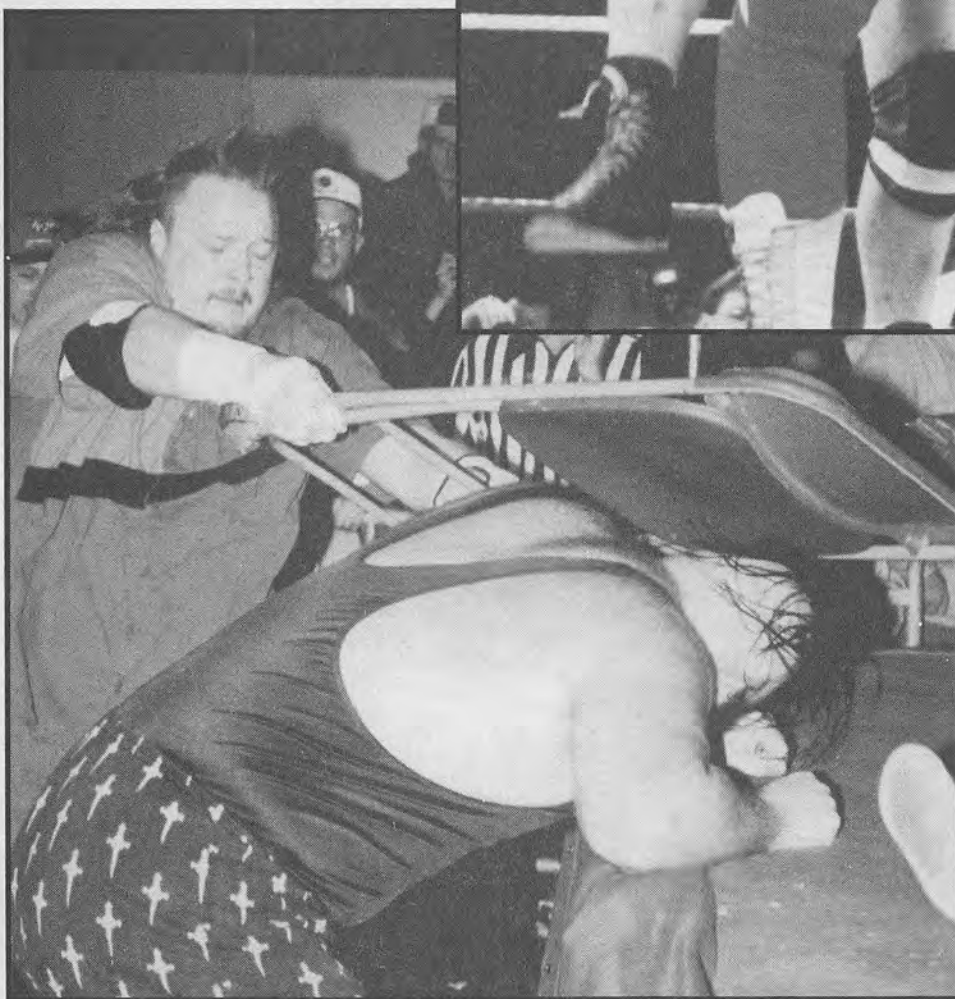
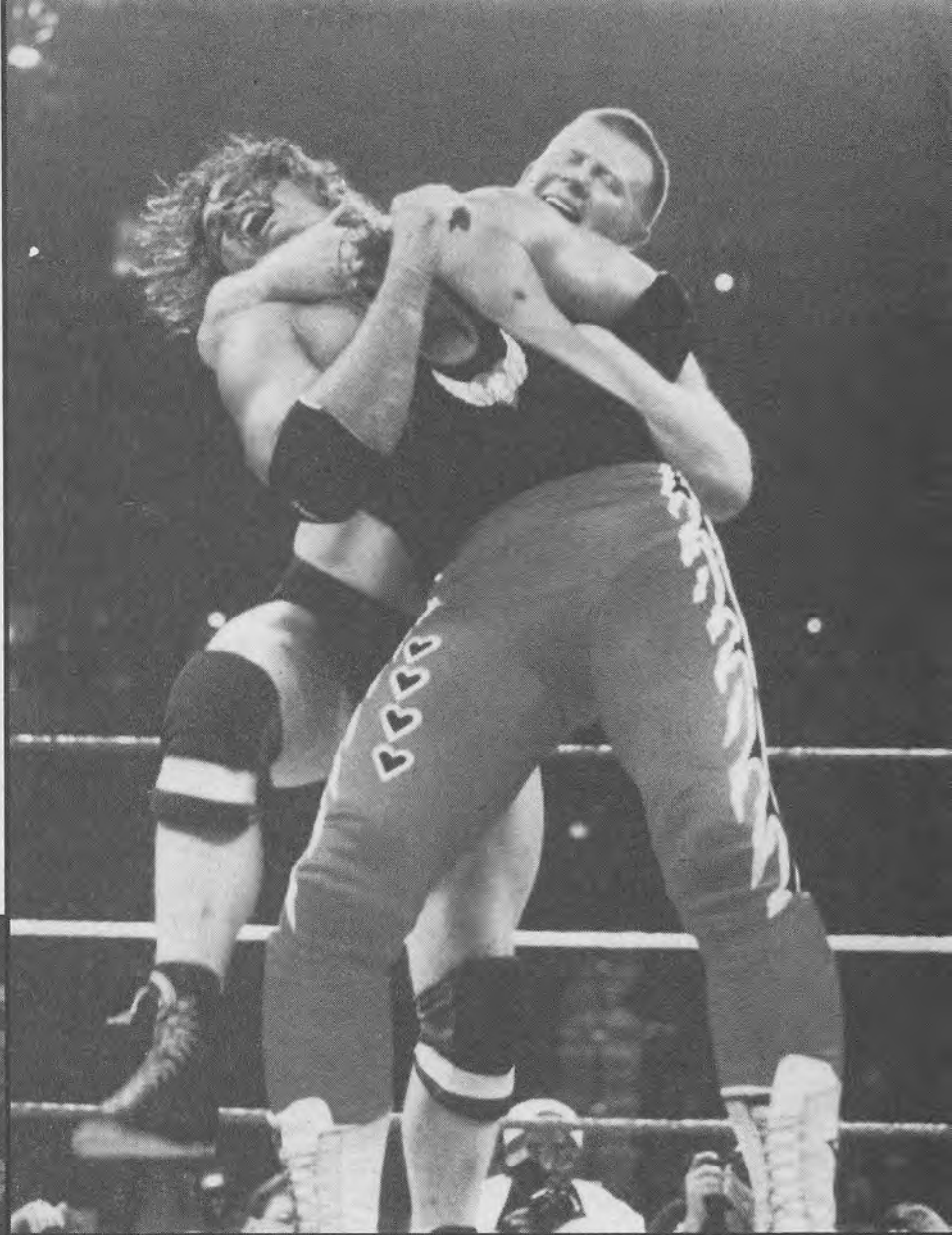
Shawn Michaels returned home to rest after collapsing in the ring on November 20. Meanwhile, one of the men involved in the beating of Michaels outside a nightclub in October was charged with second-degree assault.

Alfonso. Yes, it's the same Bill Alfonso whom fans in ECW despise because he tried to make the wrestlers in the federation more rule-abiding. "You know, when I look at everyone in ECW, I think Mr. Alfonso is the only man I can truly trust," Taz said. "He's the only friend I need!"

Mantaur, now **Bruiser Mastino**, is not doing well in ECW so far. He lost his first three matches in that federation ... More federation jumping: **The Heavenly Bodies** have entered ECW, where their feud with **Public Enemy** was cut short when **Rocco Rock** and **Johnny Grunge** decided to leave for WCW.

I asked the boys if their confidence might have been affected by their recent sub-par effort against

(Continued on page 50)



He's at it again! Bob Backlund attacked Bret Hart and a few non-wrestling WWF employees with his chicken wing in late-November. WWF President Gorilla Monsoon has done very little to deter him from doing it again.

Swinging chairs at opponents' heads is something Johnny Grunge and his partner, Rocco Rock, have done regularly for the last few years in ECW. Soon they'll be trying their luck in WCW.

from the desk of...

Stuart M. Saks

What is ahead for professional wrestling in the year 1996? That's the question we threw out to our own editors for the final feature in the inaugural Pro Wrestling Illustrated Almanac. I don't like questions like that. Too much pressure. Within 12 months, everybody knows how smart—or dumb—you are. I like questions like this one: What is ahead for U.S. wrestling in the 21st century? By the time we get far enough into the 2000s to get an answer, who's going to remember that the question was even asked?

Still, I've given the question some thought, and I've come up with a few possible possibilities.

• **WCW takes the undisputed title of wrestling's top promotion.** WCW began an all-out blitz against the WWF beginning in 1994, not-so-coincidentally the year of the steroid trial against Titan Sports and its head, Vince McMahon. Ted Turner, who bought the promotion in 1988 with the intention of overtaking the WWF, suffered through six years of being number-two before opening the bank when his big opportunity came last year. By importing a healthy chunk of the WWF's talent roster (including the immortal Hulk Hogan), then producing a first-rate live show to compete with the WWF's highly rated Monday Night Raw, WCW may just have pulled ahead of the WWF.

Even with the WWF's considerable resources, it is still a privately owned company competing with a deep-pocketed corporation (Turner Broadcasting System) that is on the verge of becoming part of the largest media company in the world (Time Warner).

With solid leadership for the first time in Eric Bischoff, WCW shows no signs of slowing its attack. The Time Warner factor will arm WCW with even more weapons, including an even greater presence in the cable-TV and pay-per-view universes. As WCW gets stronger, the WWF will have more trouble hanging on to the already-thin talent roster it currently employs.

By 2000, Vince McMahon will be the blow-by-blow man for Starrcade.

• **The WWF regains control of wrestling as Time Warner pulls the plug on WCW.** Just what will happen when the TBS-Time Warner deal is finalized later this year? That's a question on the minds of a lot more than wrestling people these days. Turner is to retain control of his TBS interests, but he will no longer be company's number-one man. That honor belongs to Gerald Levin, Time Warner's chairman of the board. While Turner was willing to wage his costly war of attrition with the

(Continued on page 52)

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in focus

By Craig Peters

A MUST FOR EVERY WRESTLING FAN

Did you know that on January 21, 1944, the City Auditorium in Houston, Texas, hosted one of the most unusual nights of wrestling ever? It was a joint benefit with wrestlers and the Houston Symphony Orchestra that brought in more than a million dollars in sales of war bonds. Move over, WrestleMania: Ringside seats went for a hefty \$500 war bond purchase! In the main event, Wild Bill Longson battled Lou Thesz. But what was most interesting about the evening was that a match between Ellis Bashara and Dave Levin was accompanied by symphonic arrangement by the Houston Symphony Orchestra! And Bashara, after winning the bout, pushed the conductor aside to lead the orchestra himself!

That's just *one* of the fascinating tidbits to be found in the 1996 *Pro Wrestling Illustrated Almanac And Book Of Facts!* And while I hesitate to turn this month's installment of "In Focus" into a two-page "This Month In" feature, I can't help but be excited about this amazing project!

We spent months poring through thousands of pages of newspaper clippings, hundreds of back issues of magazines, and dozens of computerized reference files. The result is a 196-page reference tool that is a must-read for every wrestling fan, young and old.

Does it sound like I'm patting ourselves on the back? Well, with apologies to Barry Horowitz, I guess I am. But when you see this *Almanac*, you'll understand why. Every sport has had reference tools for the fan in the street. Every sport, that is, except pro wrestling.

Now wrestling has the reference tool it has wanted for so many years.

Back in the August 1995 installment of "In Focus," I asked you readers to send in your suggestions as to what you wanted to see in the *Almanac*. Dozens of you responded with your suggestions, and I'm happy to report that a great many of those suggestions were taken to heart and included in this landmark publishing event.

Want title histories? We have comprehensive championship lineages of active titles like the NWA, WCW, and the WWF, world singles and tag team titles, the WWF Intercontinental title, the U.S. heavyweight title, ECW and USWA titles, and so much more! Plus, we give you title histories for important defunct titles like the

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AWA World heavyweight and tag team titles, the Florida title, the Georgia National title, the Missouri title, and more!

Another major section in the *Almanac* is a chart of every pay-per-view wrestling card ever (through the end of 1995, there have been 97), plus complete results of each one of those cards! Our chart includes attendance figures for each card, and our results section includes, in many cases, matches held in the building that weren't aired on the pay-per-view broadcasts!

Want more? No problem! We have a 12-page section detailing wrestling overseas, with special emphasis on the All-Japan and New Japan federations! We have a 12-page section providing you with all the winners of the *PWI* Achievement Awards ever—including categories (like Girl Wrestler of the Year and Midget of the Year) no longer in existence! We have a section detailing the biggest live crowds of all-time! We have a directory of promotional addresses worldwide!

Think we're done? Wrong! We also have profiles of 50 top stars in the sport today! A 12-page section of statistics—heights, weights, hometowns, pro debuts, and birthdays—for nearly 500 wrestlers! We detail the biggest news stories of 1995, review dozens of memorable events from 1995, and look ahead to where wrestling will be going in 1996!

And that Houston Symphony item? That's one of more than 200 items we've assembled into a year-by-year history of memorable highlights in the sport, interesting facts that you'll find entertaining and informative and ...

Look, the bottom line is this: Go to the newsstand and check it out. You'll won't be sorry! ☐



Did you know that Bill Longson wrestled on a card that also included a performance from the Houston Symphony Orchestra? You would if you bought the 1996 *Pro Wrestling Illustrated Almanac*.

win or lose draw

BY ANDY RODRIGUEZ

CURT HENNIG'S RETURN to the WWF is good news for people who like two things: great wrestling and obnoxious broadcasting. Thankfully, Hennig's grappling skills are more popular than his opinions. For now Hennig is only providing commentary. While he is not quite as outrageously biased as Jerry Lawler, Hennig has no desire to make any of the federation's fan favorites look good.

Especially not Diesel. "Mr. Perfect" thinks the former World champion is a highly overrated fraud, unworthy to wear such coveted gold. He says—quite rightly—that Diesel isn't close to being the wrestler he is. Also says he has respect for new World champ Bret Hart, with whom he has had some great battles, but says he could beat him, too.

In leveling his criticisms, Hennig not only is dragging down popular athletes, he is presenting himself as a viable World championship contender. Why shouldn't Hennig feel that way? At his peak, Hennig was perhaps the finest pure scientific master in the game.

Of course there's a big problem for Curt right now: his

health. A back injury forced "Perfect" out of active competition these last two years and will make it extremely difficult for him to return at full effectiveness.

Hennig is undaunted. He has spent a lot of time lately playing golf, but he's spent a lot more time trying to strengthen that back. Never mind broadcasting; He is still a wrestler at heart.

So was his dad, Larry. His younger brother, Jesse, is also showing signs that he, too, could someday be a star. But the elder Hennig was more of a brawler. He didn't trouble himself with the finer points.

His son does. "Perfect" does not want to begin competing full-time again until he's absolutely ready to return at the highest level. He won't mind if his first opponents are prelim guys, but he will not be willing to wait long for the real competition to arrive. He didn't come back for the exercise. Meanwhile, there's the witty repartee with Vince McMahon and Jim Ross. Hennig is good at it. His views are questionable, but he is entertaining and intelligent. Today, those are qualifications enough.

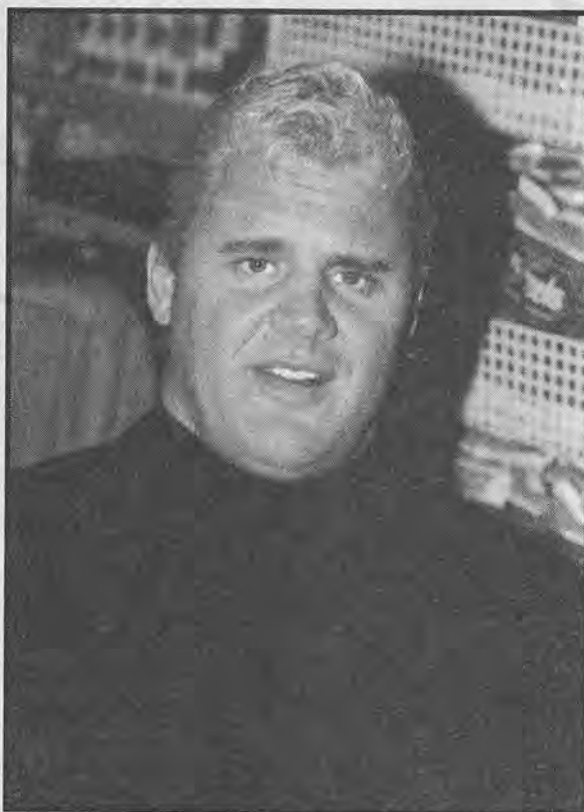
"Perfect" has also used his seat at the table to scout Hart, Diesel, Shawn Michaels, Razor Ramon, and the other members of the elite. As much as he spouts verbally, there's plenty more he keeps to himself.

Hennig's fellow wrestlers don't appreciate the fact that he has this advantage. Lawler has the same advantage, but most of them know "The King" is not nearly as dangerous as Curt. As far as they're concerned, Hennig is a great broadcaster, so good that he should remain in the booth permanently. They'd rather take verbal beatings from him than physical ones.

Their discomfort is what fuels Hennig's desire to return to the ring. He's glad he's so prominent in their minds. He wants them to think a lot about what he'll do to them when he gets back. A couple of years ago, Hennig was feuding intensely with Lex Luger. He threw a terrific scare into Lex, who definitely wasn't talking about "Perfect" when he said the competition in the WWF was too weak for his tastes.

Diesel and Michaels remember

(Continued on page 54)



"Mr. Perfect" is back, and he looks good wearing a suit and spitting out witty comments during WWF telecasts. There are at least a few WWF wrestlers hoping he stays at the broadcast table and away from the ring.

TAKE US ON!



#1: Big Ben



#2: Ace Stevens



#3: Jaeger van Dorn



#4: Bodybag Jones



#5: Wildfire Johnny Rage



#6: Eric Darkstrom



#7: Nook the Secret Weapon



#8: Derek Craven



#9: El Diablo Sanchez



#10: Tygar Singh

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WEAR-DOWN HOLDS

1. AIRPLANE SPIN
2. ARMBAR
3. ARMDRAG
4. ARMLOCK
5. ARM STRETCH
6. ARM WHIP
7. ASIAN SPIKE
8. BEAR HUG
9. BITING
10. BODY SLAM
11. BODY TACKLE
12. CHICKEN WING
13. CHOKE
14. CLAW
15. CLOTHESLINE
16. CROSS BODY BLOCK
17. DOUBLE AXEHANDLE
18. DROP KICK
19. EAGLE SPLIT
20. ELBOW SMASH
21. EYE GOUGE
22. FACE RAKE
23. FIREMAN'S CARRY RAM
24. FLYING BODY PRESS
25. FLYING CLOTHESLINE
26. FLYING DROP KICK
27. FLYING ELBOW DROP
28. FLYING HEAD BUTT
29. FLYING MARE
30. FOREARM SMASH
31. FOREIGN OBJECT
32. FULL NELSON
33. GIANT SWING
34. GRAPEVINE
35. HAIR PULLING
36. HAMMERLOCK
37. HEAD LOCK
38. HEAD STOMP
39. HEART PUNCH
40. HIP ROLL
41. IRISH WHIP
42. KNEE DROP
43. LEGLOCK
44. MANAGER INTERFERENCE
45. MONKEY FLIP
46. OVERHEAD TOSS
47. POLE RAM
48. REVERSE CHINLOCK
49. ROLLING SCISSORS
50. ROPE BURN
51. SAVATE KICK
52. SCISSORS GRIP
53. SHOULDER BREAKER
54. SLINGSHOT
55. SNAP MARE
56. STEP-OVER TOE HOLD
57. SUPLEX
58. SURFBOARD
59. TURNBUCKLE SMASH
60. WRISTLOCK

SET-UP HOLDS

61. ABDOMINAL STRETCH
62. ATOMIC DROP
63. AVALANCHE
64. BACKBREAKER
65. BACKROLL PRESS
66. BELLY TO BELLY
67. BIG SPLASH
68. BOSTON CRAB
69. BRAIN BUSTER
70. BULLDOG
71. CAMEL CLUTCH
72. COBRA CLUTCH
73. CRADLE
74. CRUCIFIX
75. DDT
76. FIGURE FOUR
77. FLYING LEG DROP
78. GOURD BUSTER
79. INDIAN DEATH LOCK
80. NECKBREAKER
81. PILEDRIVER
82. POWER BOMB
83. POWER SLAM
84. RUSSIAN SICKLE
85. SLEEPER
86. SLINGSHOT SUPLEX
87. SMALL PACKAGE
88. SPINE BUSTER
89. SUNSET FLIP
90. SUPERPLEX

NAME (PLEASE PRINT) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

WRESTLER'S NAME (NO ACTUAL PRO WRESTLER NAMES, PLEASE) _____

WRESTLER'S HEIGHT _____

WRESTLER'S WEIGHT _____

SPECIAL GIMMICK OR DESCRIPTION OF WRESTLER _____

MANAGER'S NAME (IF NOT YOU) _____

Wear-Down Holds: Choose 10 from the list of 60 shown at left. List them in the order to be used. Use each hold only once

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____

6 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____ 10 _____

Set-Up Holds: Choose 5 from the list of 30 shown at right. List them in the order to be used. Use each hold only once

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____

Finishing Hold: Create your custom final maneuver or choose a hold from the 90 shown. Limit the length to 20 letters and spaces

FINISHING HOLD _____

Opponents: Check the numbers of the men you want your wrestler to go against from the 10 at the top. Remember to enclose \$1⁰⁰ for each.

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____ 6 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____ 10 _____



TWO FOR THE SHOW. One of the highest standards of wrestling greatness used to be the rare achievement of winning world titles in both the WWF and the NWA/WCW. Nowadays, it seems everyone is doing it.

That is only a slight exaggeration. "Macho Man" Randy Savage recently became the fourth wrestler to turn the trick, joining Buddy Rogers, Ric Flair, and Hulk Hogan. While winning world titles in both federations remains a rare accomplishment, each one of these guys has had it easier than his predecessor.

Some feel Savage now must be grouped with Rogers, Flair, and Hogan as one of the indisputable all-time greats. Sorry, but I don't feel that way. Savage's WWF-WCW double says far more about the state of wrestling today than it does about him. In fact, his recent WCW World title victory does more to take some of the luster off Hogan's double than it does to affirm Savage's status as a true legend of the sport.

Savage, who won the WWF World title in 1988 and 1992, won the vacant WCW World title in a 60-man battle royal, the biggest in wrestling history, in November. Depending on your perspective, Savage either beat 59 men or was part of—literally—the biggest

three-ring circus the sport has ever seen. I agree with the latter point of view.

Savage didn't even have to pin anyone to win the title. He didn't eliminate the other 59 competitors by himself. And the match ended in controversy when Hogan—you knew this was coming—claimed he was never eliminated because he left the ring under the bottom rope, not over the top.

Does Hogan have a good grasp of the sport's history? Does George Steele have hair on his back? Hogan understands the long-term ramifications of everything he accomplishes in the sport. In fact, he probably would have put up less of a protest had a rulebreaker won the battle royal and the title rather than his "friend," because his friend was the only wrestler in those three rings who had a chance to reach the pinnacle he, Rogers, and Flair had already reached.

The idea that Savage could join an



Buddy Rogers never won another world title after Bruno Sammartino ended his WWF reign in May 1963. Chris Bernucca says Rogers will probably always be the greatest wrestler ever to win world titles in both the NWA/WCW and the WWF.

exclusive club simply by surviving a free-for-all is ludicrous. In fact, it's almost as ludicrous as achieving the championship double by winning a title match in your federation debut—which Hogan did to enter the club in 1994.

After a series of appearances and interviews, Hogan finagled a title match against Flair in his WCW debut in July of 1994. Hogan won the match, and to his credit, he proved it was no fluke by defeating Flair in a series of rematches.

However, Hogan's WCW World title reign was tarnished from there on, as he ducked challenges from Big Van Vader as long as he could, manipulated federation management, and wrestled as infrequently as possible.

This was a far cry from the fighting champion Hogan had been in the WWF in the mid- to late-1980s and early-1990s. It seems the longer Hogan remains in wrestling, the longer he dims his own aura as the one man who truly transcended the sport.

While Savage's title double somewhat subtracted from Hogan's double, the fact that both men jumped from the WWF to WCW to win their second titles speaks volumes about Flair, who accomplished his double in reverse order. The WCW title victories by Hogan and Savage seem to imply that the level of competition is much tougher in the WWF. If that is the case—and it would be hard to argue that it is not—then Flair's double should be held in much higher regard.

After dominating the NWA—which became WCW—with seven World championships, Flair entered the WWF in 1991 with a swagger and the skill to back it up. He went right after the title and interfered in one of Hogan's championship matches, forcing the belt to be held up and put up for grabs at the 1992 Royal Rumble.

Flair outlasted 29 others, remaining in the ring for more than an hour. It was a much more stout effort than the one required of Savage, who lasted just 29:19 in the World War III battle



Randy Savage and Ric Flair are two of the other three men to have won world titles in both the NWA/WCW and the WWF. Flair could be compared somewhat favorably to Rogers, argues Bernucca, but not Savage.

royal, but again, it was a title captured in a battle royal. And when Savage won the WWF title five months later, there were doubters of Flair as well.

But Flair silenced the doubters in the only fashion possible—he regained the belt in a pinfall victory over Savage, proving that his initial title win was no fluke and that the “Nature Boy” did, in fact, deserve to be included in the great company of Rogers, the original “Nature Boy.”

Rogers didn't have the multiple titles or the extended period of dominance that Savage, Hogan, and Flair possess. He won the belt in each federation just once—but the titles came consecutively in a two-year period in the early-1960s that was the height of his career.

Rogers won the NWA World title from Pat O'Connor in 1961 and held the belt for 19 months before losing it to Lou Thesz, who is merely one of the greatest wrestlers of all-time. Controversy ensued when several Northeast promoters refused to recog-

nize Thesz' title victory. Those promoters, headed by Vince McMahon Sr., held a tournament to name their own champion in April 1963 and Rogers defeated Antonino Rocca in a tournament finale to win the first WWWF belt. He lost it a month later to Bruno Sammartino, who is merely one of the greatest wrestlers of all-time.

Rogers won belts in both federations without the benefit of a battle royal, a lesser opponent, or a favorable schedule. Thirty-two years later, the standard he established is still the one by which all wrestlers must measure themselves. And all of them—including Flair, Hogan, and Savage—still come up short. Given the freedom of movement afforded wrestlers in the modern era, someone eventually will become the fifth wrestler to win world titles in both federations, and someone will be sixth and seventh. But only Rogers will be the first. And considering what he was up against, he will always be the best. □



*If you wish to
contribute to
Ellner's mailbag,
send your letters to:*

TOP ROPE

Box 1148

Ft. Washington, PA 19034

(Editor's note: The opinions expressed in this column are those of the letter writers and Eddie Ellner himself. They do not necessarily reflect the editorial views of this magazine.)

FOR ALL ITS idiosyncrasies, pro wrestling reflects a trend disturbing the whole universe of pro sports. Just as free agents have destroyed fan loyalty in team sports, the increase in the number of ring mercenaries out there has ruined federation identification. It used to be you could name a wrestler and know exactly where he wrestled and what his style was. Another casualty is in the tag team realm, where, because of movement and contract disputes, you are unlikely to see teams sticking together for more than a few months.

Too bad, because with the teaming of The Kid and "Psycho" Sid Vicious, the WWF has one of the most compelling unions of the last 25 years. By his lonesome, Sid never became the force we all hoped he would. By contrast, for all his tricks and skills, The Kid cannot compete at his weight at this level and expect to win consistently. Together, they are a perfect blend of size, strength, smarts, and stamina—a championship-caliber team that, unfortunately, in this modern era of nomadic wrestling, probably won't stick together long enough to explore its true potential.

Dear Eddie,

If you could choose one wrestler to receive a lifetime ban from the sport of professional wrestling, who would you nominate?

CAROLINE WATTS
Warwickshire, UK

Dear Caroline,

I don't think anyone deserves to be banished, unless he demonstrates bubbling affection toward Vince McMahon. Sure, we can do without such lackeys as Dustin Rhodes or Robert Gibson, but we also need a certain subhuman talent level to flog and amuse ourselves with.

Dear Eddie,

What was your reaction when you heard about the folding of Smoky Mountain Wrestling in November? I think it was a tragedy. SMW had some of the best and most exciting wrestling I've seen in a long time.

HARRY WILKINS
Paducah, KY

Dear Harry,

I, too, was saddened to hear of the demise of Smoky Mountain Wrestling. For all the success Jim Cornette has had as a manager in the WWF in the last two years, it seemed to me that he was most at home in Smoky Mountain. It was there that he could use his tennis racket to his heart's delight, without fear of reprisal from the higher-ups at Titan Tower. But

fear not for those who were employed by Smoky Mountain. As I stated so eloquently above, most wrestlers today are mere mercenaries. They will go where the biggest paycheck is almost every time. The Robert Gibsons, Ricky Mortons, Tommy Riches, and Buddy Landells of the world will continue to wrestle elsewhere for many, many years to come, whether we want them to or not.

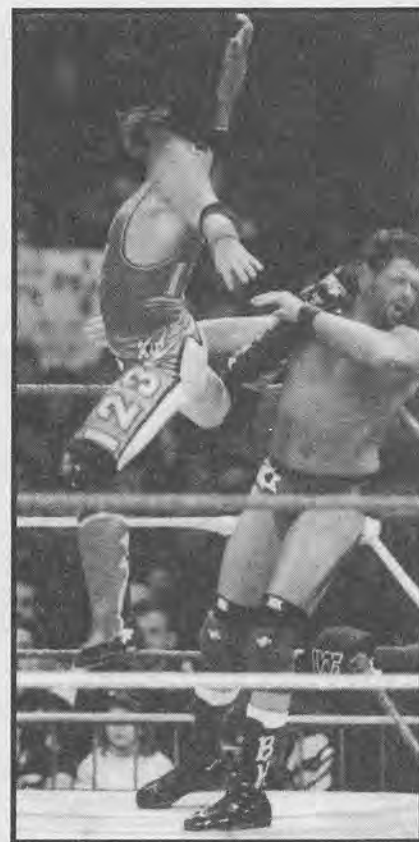
Dear Eddie,

If you formed a stable as a manager, who would you include in it and why?

YURIY KLEYNER
Gaithersburg, MD

Dear Yuriy,

It's like ordering at a Chinese restaurant. You need one from each column. A savvy veteran like Stan Hansen. An enthusiastic youngster like The Kid. A wrestler with unsur-
(Continued on page 56)



The Kid, a man Eddie Ellner would welcome in his stable of wrestlers, executes a perfect spinning savate kick against Barry Horowitz.

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- 1) Abdullah The Butcher
- 2) The Sheik
- 3) Pampero Firpo
- 4) Cactus Jack

Paul Orndorff played pro football for what NFL team?

- 1) New Orleans Saints
- 2) Dallas Cowboys
- 3) Los Angeles Rams
- 4) New York Jets

True or False: Razor Ramon attended high school in Germany

- 1) True
- 2) False

Steve Austin was the first graduate of what professional wrestler's wrestling school?

- 1) Ultimate Warrior
- 2) Larry Sharpe
- 3) Chris Adams
- 4) Killer Kowalski

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THE DATE: JANUARY 16, 1996

THE PLACE: NEWSSTANDS EVERYWHERE

THE BOTTOM LINE: PREPARE TO GET BLOWN AWAY!



Know What?

Ahmed Johnson's Got A Gripe...

*You would, too, if you were one
of the most powerful
wrestlers to hit the WWF in a
long time, were undefeated
in the federation, were
champion of the USWA,
and you still
weren't getting
any respect*

By Bryan Ethier

BREAKFAST: TWO grapefruits, half a cantaloupe, a bowl of bran flakes, two pieces of dry wheat toast ... and a bad dream.

Ahmed Johnson bites into the overripe fruit, spewing a fountain of acidic juice across the kitchen of his Memphis hotel suite.

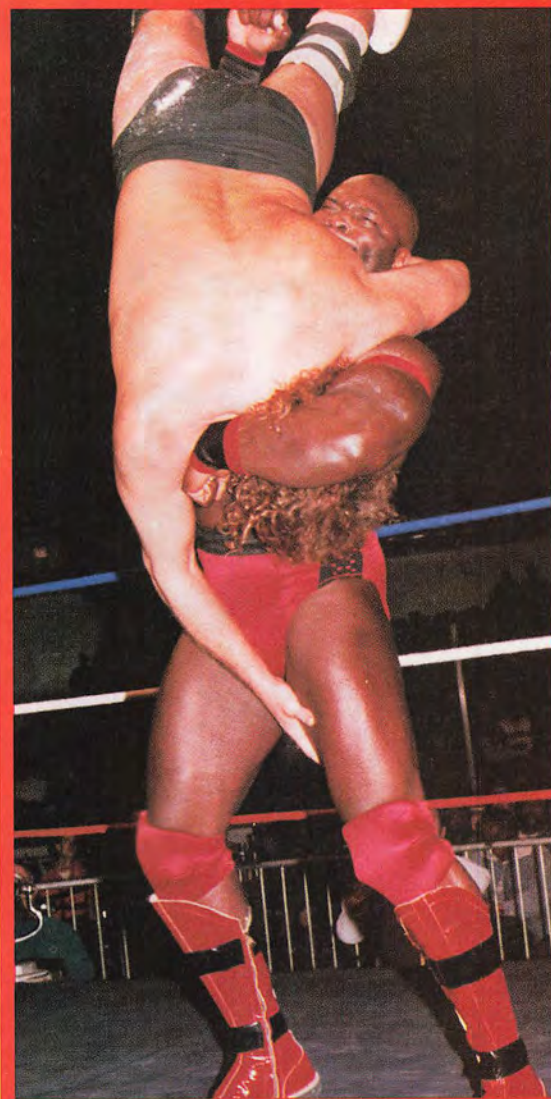
"I'd like to shoot juice in Jerry 'The King' Lawler's eye," Johnson mutters. He spits a seed across the room. It flicks off a painting hanging on a wall. "In your eye, all you doubters," Johnson cries.

Does Johnson seem upset? It's

Ahmed Johnson is proud of the fact that he is the USWA heavyweight champion. Proud, but not satisfied. He thinks he's entitled to a shot at the WWF title. So far, no one is listening.



Johnson overwhelmed Lawler for the USWA belt November 6 (above), then did the same to challenger Tracey Smothers a few weeks later (right). You would think the WWF would be happy to give such a popular powerhouse title bouts.



barely 8 a.m. on a glorious Monday morning. What mood will he be in when he steps into the squared circle later this evening? Ornerly, as rankled as a cornered stray cat with a foul-smelling mouse dangling before its nose.

But who can blame Johnson for being a trifle piqued? Every morning he dines on carbohydrates, proteins, and a bowl of humility with hollandaise sauce. Worse, he has only the memory of what is now a bad dream to serve as a dining companion.

The bad dream? Well, actually, it's Johnson's own mental replay of one of the greatest nights of his career: November 6, 1995. That was the night he beat Lawler to

capture the USWA heavyweight championship. More impressive was the sight of Johnson body-slammng Lawler 10 straight times before polishing off the king of narcissism with a lung-deflating power-slam and pin.

A nightmare for Johnson? But he won, you say! True. Unfortunately, it was a victory that has gone totally unnoticed by the WWF and its fans. In fact, since that night in Memphis, not one WWF official, promoter, or spokesman has publicly acknowledged Johnson as the USWA heavyweight champ.

"I think I have a legitimate gripe,"

Johnson acknowledged during a recent trip to Memphis, his eyes burning with bitterness and resentment. "I'm a champion, and I should receive the same level of respect as a Bret Hart or a Razor Ramon. Just because I'm a new guy on the block, they consider me just an up-and-comer. A champion is a champion, regardless of whether it's in the WWF or the USWA."

Johnson may acknowledge that fact, but others haven't. Certainly not Lawler, who was humiliated by Johnson on that memorable autumn evening, but has an excuse ready.

"Ahmed Johnson is just a chump, not a champ," Lawler argued. "I had an off-night. Less than 24 hours earlier, I found out my favorite NFL team, the Cleveland Browns, was moving to Baltimore. I was heartsick. I couldn't sleep the night before. I was tired, and my reflexes weren't as sharp as usual. Give me a fair shot at Ahmed and you'll see how long the chump stays on his feet!"

According to reliable sources inside the WWF, Johnson has approached WWF President Gorilla Monsoon on several occasions, demanding a title shot against WWF titleholder Bret Hart.

"I have the greatest and utmost respect for Bret," said Johnson. "No wrestler can match his scientific skill in the ring, but he will not be able to escape my power. When I lock on a bearhug, I am like a python; he is my quarry."

There may be some truth in Johnson's assertion. At 6'4", 255 pounds, the Pearl River, Mississippi, native has the chiseled physique of a world-class bodybuilder. Although he has limited technical skills, Johnson can out-muscle virtually any wrestler in the world. Twice this year he has bodyslammed 589-pound Yoko-

zuna, a feat previously accomplished only by Lex Luger. That alone sent shock waves through the WWF.

(Continued on page 60)

Before Ahmed did it twice this year, only Lex Luger had been able to bodyslam Yokozuna. After Luger did it, he got a World title shot. Johnson is angry that he keeps getting fed mid-level wrestlers as opponents.



If he can't get a match with Bret Hart, he'd settle for an Intercontinental title match against the "Bad Guy." Johnson handled himself well against Razor Ramon during the wildcard match at Survivor Series.



Armstrong was not only SMW commissioner, he was also a wrestler. Who could forget Armstrong's Army—Rick Morton, Scott, Bob, and Steve Armstrong, and Robert Gibson—uniting to battle Jim Cornette and his gang in 1993?

BOB ARMSTRONG

IT'S THE DAY after for "Bullet" Bob Armstrong. He's now the former commissioner of Smoky Mountain Wrestling, but this time, his job status has nothing to do with Jim Cornette. Unfortunately, there's no longer anything for Armstrong to be commissioner of. Smoky Mountain Wrestling is yesterday's news: The federation folded during the last week in November.

Rumors of the impending demise of the Morristown, Tennessee-based federation started circulating right after Thanksgiving, when several SMW wrestlers told **PWI** correspondent Bill Needham—who doubles as a promoter—that they were looking for work. The last SMW card took place on November 25 in Johnson City, Tennessee, as the rumors became fact on November 28.

The news was greeted with sadness. In its nearly four years of existence, Smoky Mountain Wrestling had emerged as one of the most interesting and exciting independents in the world. Memorable moments included Cornette's battles with Armstrong over the SMW commissionerhip, the breakup of Rock 'n' Roll Express teammates Rick Morton and Robert Gibson, the emergence of Tammy Fytch as a manager to be reckoned with, "Dirty White Boy" Tony Anthony's conversion to Northernism, and the war within the state in '95, as SMW battled with the Memphis-based USWA.

That war is now over, though some of the wrestlers involved are still feuding.

Shortly after SMW's demise, Armstrong sat down to speak with Senior Editor Bill Apter, Managing Editor Dave Lenker, and Senior Writer Dave Rosenbaum. It was an emotional interview.

DAVE LENKER: Thank you for joining us, Bob, under what have to be very difficult and trying circumstances. Can you express the emotions you're feeling at this time?

BOB ARMSTRONG: Actually, I don't think it's all sunk in yet. It's always sad when something like this happens in any sport, but what you try to do is learn from a situation and make it benefit you in the future. That way, nobody comes out a loser. Of course, it's hard to feel that way right now. A lot of

66 Smoky Mountain
was just a good
old-fashioned,
old-time promotion ...
just a lot of good,
solid, intense
wrestling that fans
could really get into
and appreciate.
I'll miss it. 99

people put their hearts into Smoky Mountain Wrestling because we believed in what we were doing, so that makes it doubly hard to swallow.

DAVE ROSENBAUM: What happened? Why did Smoky Mountain fold?

ARMSTRONG: It's very simple. Everything in this business, any business for that matter, comes down to finances. Times are very tough everywhere these days, and it's just getting more and more difficult for any business to survive. Just putting together a weekly TV show costs a bundle of money, and then promoting three or four shows a week ... well, that was expensive, too. WCW and the WWF have

grown way out of control. I'm not saying what they've done or what they're doing is bad, but they've become bigger than anyone ever thought. In the old days, the WWF stuck to its corner of the country, the NWA basically stuck to selected cities, the AWA had the Midwest, and the independents filled in the holes. Everyone had their nice piece of the pie.

ROSENBAUM: But nobody was getting too rich.

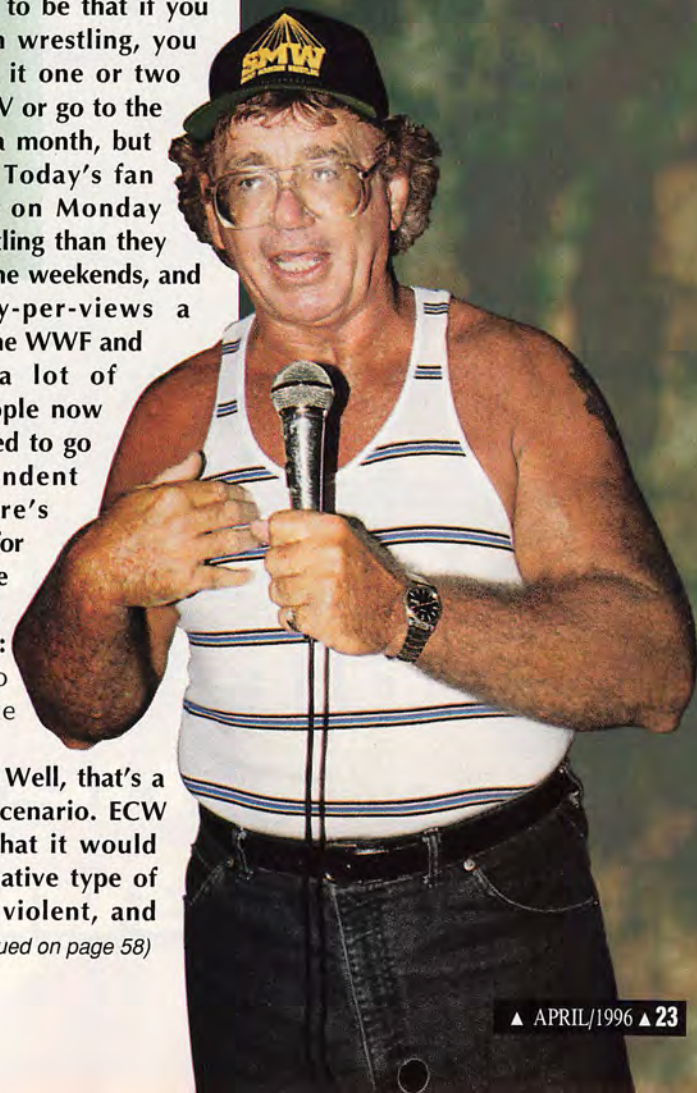
ARMSTRONG: Not exactly. A lot of people were doing very well, but what was important was that the independents were a place for young wrestlers to grow and veterans to return. They served their purpose, both to the fans and the wrestlers. But you have to understand that times have changed. Wrestling originally became popular because of TV, but then TV changed. Cable took over, and then there was the technology for pay-per-view. It used to be that if you wanted to watch wrestling, you could either see it one or two days a week on TV or go to the local card once a month, but that's changed. Today's fan gets two shows on Monday night, more wrestling than they can swallow on the weekends, and about two pay-per-views a month, all from the WWF and WCW. That's a lot of wrestling, so people now have less of a need to go to the independent shows, and there's less room on TV for the SMWs, the USWAs, the ECWs.

BILL APTER: But ECW seems to be doing quite nicely.

ARMSTRONG: Well, that's a whole different scenario. ECW made a choice, that it would provide an alternative type of wrestling, more violent, and

(Continued on page 58)

Every issue, reporters from PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED will participate in an incisive press conference with a top wrestling star. The questions will be demanding. And the answers will reveal the innermost thoughts of the giants of the sport.



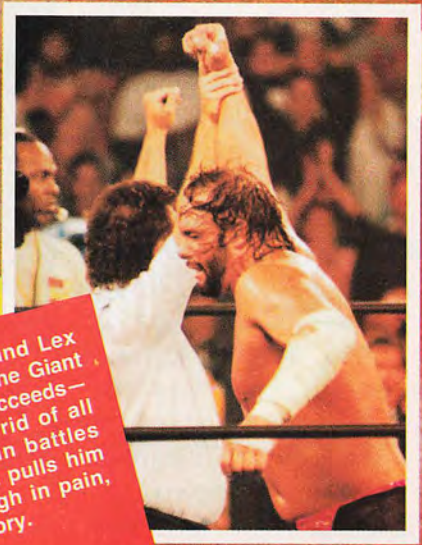
“It’s min

Hulk Hogan and Randy Savage shouldn't have wasted all their time fighting over the WCW World title. Their real problem was Kevin Sullivan. He knew it, but until Ric Flair walked off with the title, they apparently didn't!

**While
Savage
And Hogan
Fiddle With
The Title ...
WCW Burns**

Photo by Gary Knapp

e!



By Dave Rosenbaum

EVEN IN HIS wildest dreams, Kevin Sullivan had no idea that his plan would work so perfectly ... or achieve so much more than the desired effect. Of course, Sullivan would have been ecstatic had The Giant won the WCW World title outright at World War III, but in many ways, this was even better.

He could barely control his laugh-

From top to bottom: Sting and Lex Luger join forces to dump The Giant over the top. Their effort succeeds—sort of—after Hogan gets rid of all three of them. Hulk Hogan battles with The Giant after Giant pulls him out. Randy Savage, though in pain, celebrates his tainted victory.

ter and glee as he watched the replay on one of the closed-circuit monitors that were placed in locker rooms of the Scope in Norfolk, Virginia. The replays clearly showed The Giant pulling Hulk Hogan underneath the bottom rope, rather than Hogan getting eliminated from the battle royal by going over the top rope.

Sullivan finally let out a little laugh as he watched Hogan and Savage arguing over the WCW World title belt, which Savage had seemingly won.

"You're a friend of mine!" Savage said. "I value your opinion.

I didn't see nothing, I swear, but I live by 'What it is is what it is.' Can you handle that? Yes or no?"

Sullivan interjected.

"No! Of course not," he yelled at the screen. "He can't handle losing! He can't handle nothing, and he especially can't handle you winning at his expense!"

Now Sullivan was absolutely cackling.

"Look at this! Hogan's begging the crowd to help him!" Sullivan said. "Can you believe his arrogance? Like he's never benefited from a bad decision."

Sullivan's happiness turned to

THREE RINGS OF MAYHEM: WRES

Pez Whatley wanted the night to last forever, so he was perfectly happy when he was announced as the first man into the ring for the three-ring, 60-man battle royal at World War III.

"How many chances does a man get at the WCW World title?" the 20-year veteran said. "This was my chance. Sure, I knew it was a longshot, but I had a shot at the belt. I could almost smell it."

Fate didn't help Whatley on this night. He was one of the first men eliminated, but he was there. He was in the big game, as were 59 other wrestlers—big and small, superstars, lesserlights, and everyone in between—on November 26, 1995, in Norfolk. Never before had the WCW World title been put up for grabs in a battle royal, and never had so many

wrestlers had an equal shot at the belt.

"You spend your whole life trying to get into position for just one shot at the belt," said Eddy Guerrero, who lasted more than 27 minutes. "Then you get this one shot, and you have to grab it.

I looked around after about 25 minutes and saw that me, Hogan, Flair, Anderson, Luger, Sting, Savage, One Man Gang, and The Giant were the only ones left. It sent a chill down my spine. Maybe I shouldn't have looked around."



Three rings, 60 determined men, one of the most chaotic matches ever seen!

brief disappointment when Hogan and Savage settled their differences, at least for the moment, and shook hands.

"Don't believe what you just saw," Sullivan warned. "Hogan's mad because he didn't get his way, Savage is mad at Hogan for not taking the loss like a man, and folks, we have a ballgame!"

One night later at *WCW Monday Nitro*, Hogan and Savage had another confrontation, which ended, incredibly, with the telltale portion of the videotape having been mysteriously erased. As Hogan glared at Savage, it was

easy to tell what was going through the "Hulkster's" mind: *You did this to save your own butt!* Hogan didn't say it, but he obviously thought it.

"It's become a matter of trust," Sullivan suggested. "Let's follow the trail of breadcrumbs. First, Luger comes to WCW and challenges Hogan. Then my Dungeon of Doom intervenes, for lack of a better word, and we have ourselves a little four-way triangle: Hogan, Savage, Luger, and Sting. All of a sudden, there are seeds of distrust, because we beat the crap out of Hogan and didn't lay a hand on Luger.

"Don't think that was planned? Think again.

"Then we have Sting convincing Hogan that he should trust Luger, but Savage doesn't trust Luger, and you know what? He's right. So we have Hogan vs. Giant at Halloween Havoc, and Luger and Jimmy Hart join me and turn against Hogan. Now Hogan's thinking, *Maybe I should have listened to Savage*. And then the situation totally collapses for Hogan when he loses the belt and Nick Bockwinkel puts it up for grabs at World War III.

"But before we even have the battle royal, Luger wrestles

STING'S BIGGEST MATCH EVER!

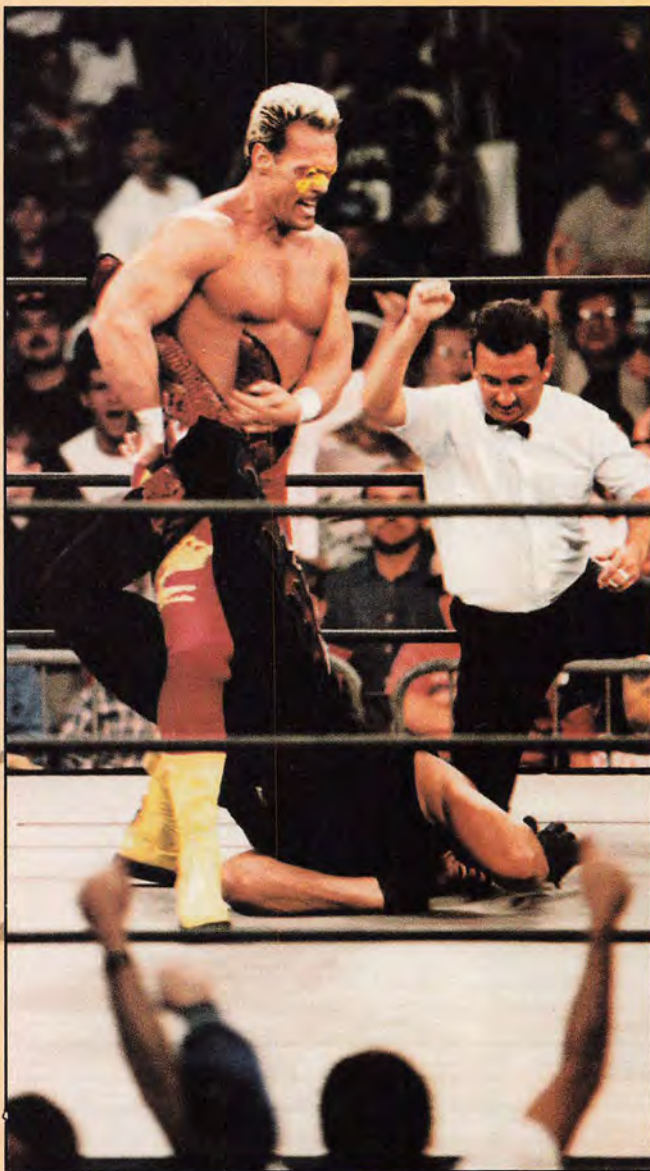


The match started with 20 men in each of three rings. With 15:48 gone, all of the action shifted to one ring. The outsiders—those with a million-to-one shot of winning the belt under normal circumstances—started getting eliminated: Dallas Page and Johnny Badd at 21:51, followed by Sgt. Craig Pittman, Chris Benoit, Kurasawa, Meng, and The Zodiac. Guerrero was gone at 27:05. Arn Anderson followed Flair out of the ring at 28:22.

With 29:19 gone, Hogan saw an opportunity as Luger and Sting tried to dump The Giant over the top. Hogan knocked all three men over as Savage eliminated One Man Gang. But then The Giant pulled Hogan underneath the bottom rope and referee Randy Anderson, unaware of what happened, declared Savage the new WCW World champion.

—Dave Lenker

Everybody, it seemed, wanted The Yeti out of the ring as soon as possible.



Left: Sting's Scorpion deathlock wasn't too much for Hogan to handle at their November 20 match. Above: Sting survived Hogan's suplex, too. In the weeks after the match, they were still bickering.

Savage, and it's Sting who convinces Luger to break that armlock at the end. And [on November 6] at *Nitro*, Sting is ready to rip Ric Flair's legs off with his Scorpion deathlock until Luger whispers into his ear and gets him to break the hold. So whose side is Sting on? Why is Luger listening to Sting? Who's Hogan's friend? Then it's every man for himself in World War III, and Hogan, who's never thought of anybody but himself, not only eliminates my Giant, but he eliminates Luger and Sting, too, so now the seeds of discontent have grown into giant sequoias.

"And then, in the psychological *coup de grace*, Savage wins the

belt because he makes believe he didn't see Hogan getting pulled under the bottom rope. He didn't see it? Of course he saw it! Who's he trying to fool?!"

The result is that the Hogan-Sting-Savage alliance, which had the potential to be all-powerful in WCW for years to come, is now fractured, or at least heavily splintered. Instead of fighting one large invincible enemy, the Dungeon of Doom and The Four Horsemen are now battling three dissension-racked separate entities. Not to mention Luger, who's clearly out on his own.

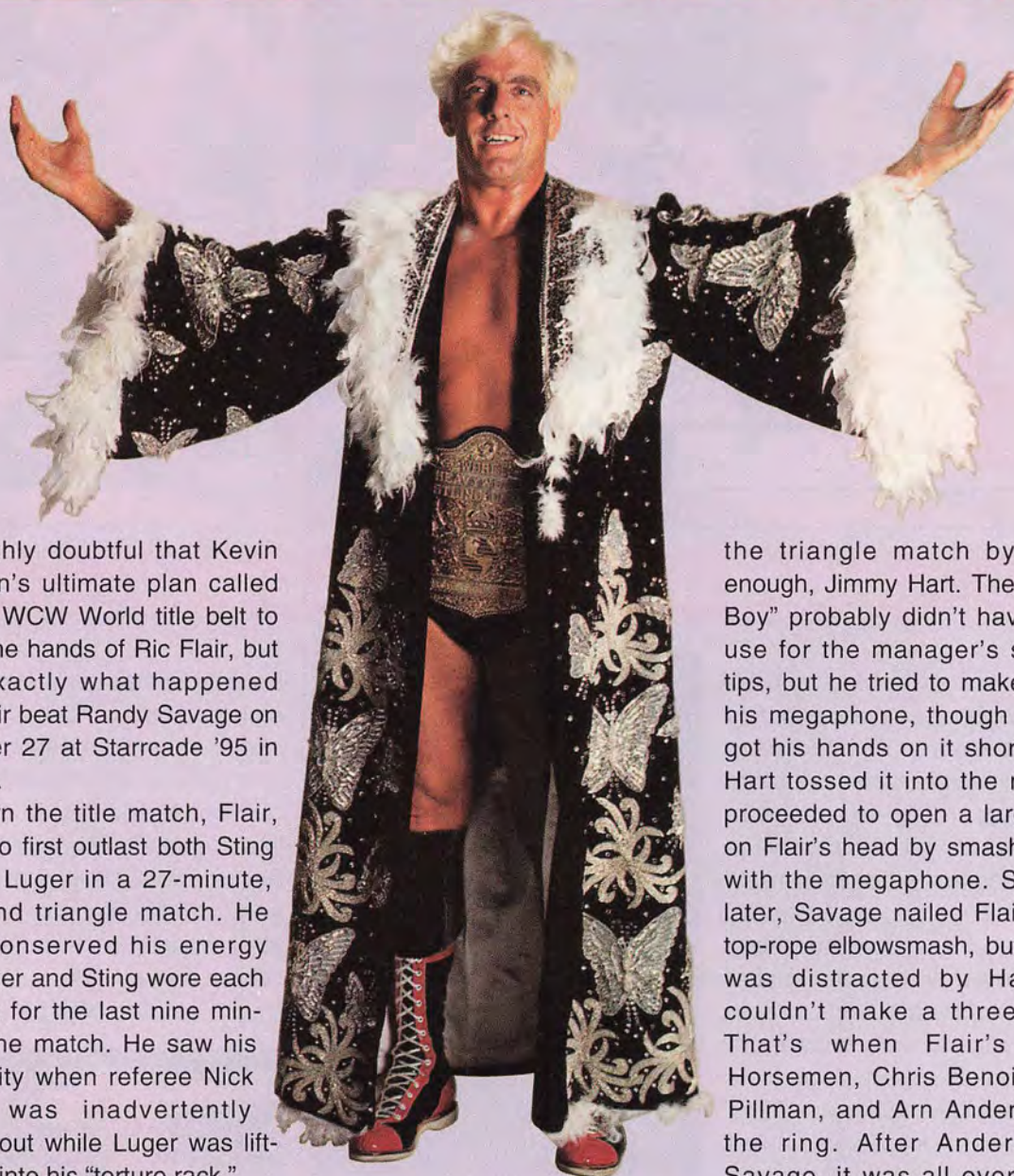
A weakness has been created, and Sullivan is fully equipped to

take advantage of such a weakness.

"There's one thing Hogan doesn't seem to realize," Sullivan said. "He might have a gripe about the World title, but even if he's right, that just makes it a tie. He keeps talking about *his* World title, as if he owns it, but the most he has a right to is a shot at Savage with the belt up for grabs. That's the most. If I was Savage, I'd be downright furious!"

All indications are that Savage is furious at Hogan for spoiling his big moment and even angrier at Hogan for carrying on the controversy. Hogan, on the other hand, has privately reminded the "Macho Man"

RIC FLAIR: "ACTUALLY, IT'S MINE!"



It is highly doubtful that Kevin Sullivan's ultimate plan called for the WCW World title belt to fall into the hands of Ric Flair, but that's exactly what happened when Flair beat Randy Savage on December 27 at Starrcade '95 in Nashville.

To earn the title match, Flair, 45, had to first outlast both Sting and Lex Luger in a 27-minute, 20-second triangle match. He wisely conserved his energy while Luger and Sting wore each other out for the last nine minutes of the match. He saw his opportunity when referee Nick Patrick was inadvertently knocked out while Luger was lifting Sting into his "torture rack."

Flair shoved both Luger and Sting out of the ring, and when Patrick came to, he counted them out and awarded Flair the bout.

"The better man isn't always the youngest man, the strongest man, or the fastest man," Flair boasted afterward. "Ninety-nine times out of 100, the smartest man is going to win. And I just happen to be smarter than 99 out of 100 men!"

Flair was smart enough to know that if he expended too much energy in the triangle match, he

wouldn't have much left for the championship match, which was to start immediately afterward.

As it turned out, Flair was fresh and perhaps even at an advantage against Savage. "I was warmed up and ready to go," Flair said. "When Savage came to the ring, he hadn't even broken a sweat, which tells me that rather than getting himself physically prepared for battle, he was watching the triangle match."

Flair was joined in the ring after

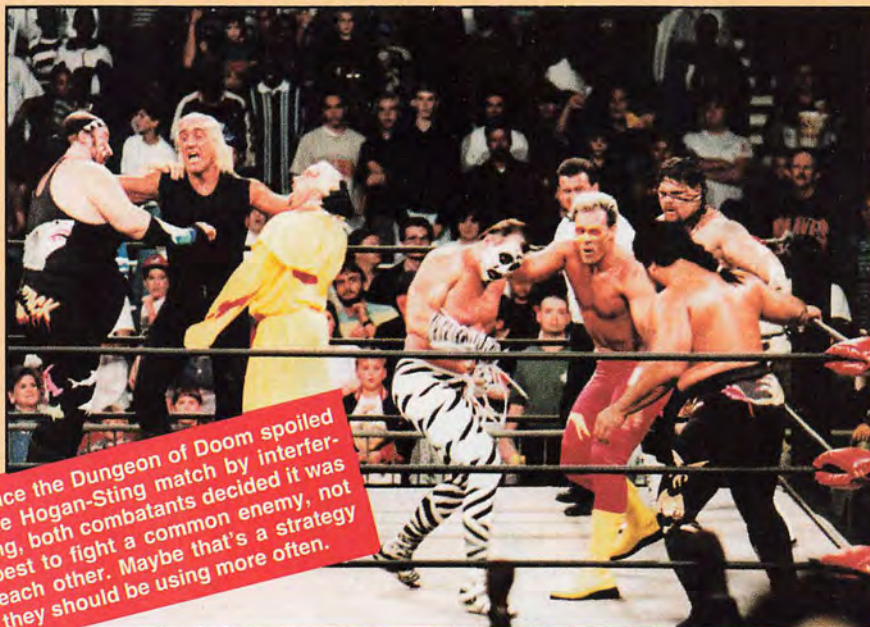
the triangle match by, oddly enough, Jimmy Hart. The "Nature Boy" probably didn't have much use for the manager's strategy tips, but he tried to make use of his megaphone, though Savage got his hands on it shortly after Hart tossed it into the ring. He proceeded to open a large gash on Flair's head by smashing him with the megaphone. Seconds later, Savage nailed Flair with a top-rope elbowsmash, but Patrick was distracted by Hart and couldn't make a three-count. That's when Flair's fellow Horsemen, Chris Benoit, Brian Pillman, and Arn Anderson, hit the ring. After Anderson hit Savage, it was all over for the "Macho Man."

With blood streaming down his face, Flair scored the pin at 8:41, making him an 11-time world champion (nine NWA/WCW, two WWF).

"Didn't you guys say something in your magazine about me retiring before I embarrassed myself?" Flair said, singling out our reporter at the postmatch press conference. "I'll be looking for an apology."

Done.

—Bill Apter



Once the Dungeon of Doom spoiled the Hogan-Sting match by interfering, both combatants decided it was best to fight a common enemy, not each other. Maybe that's a strategy they should be using more often.



WORLD WAR III: FALL OUT

Ric Flair got far away from the TV cameras before venting his anger at Arn Anderson, who eliminated him from the battle royal. According to insiders, Anderson told Flair, "You knew the rules. It was every man for himself. What were we supposed to do, share the belt?" ... Scott Armstrong was removed on a stretcher after being fitted with a neck brace. Medical officials were unaware of how the injury occurred, but said Armstrong didn't suffer any long-term injuries ... Hogan tried to get WCW matchmakers to give him a title match against Savage the night after World War III at Nitro ... Flair and Anderson both expressed their displeasure with Chris Benoit, the first Horseman eliminated. They were hoping to have all three Horsemen remaining for a showdown with Hogan and Savage ... Sting said the atomic spinecrusher The Giant used on him was "the most painful kneedrop anyone has ever used on me, bar none!" ... Were The Giant's actions planned, or did he act on the spur of the



Sting has felt the pain of a lot of spinecrushers in his career, but The Giant's, he says, was the worst of them.

moment? "The only thing I knew was that this wasn't going to be Hogan's night," he said afterward ... Sting said he didn't believe Hogan eliminated him on purpose. Luger said, "Hogan showed his true self. Look at him—eliminating a friend." Responded Hogan: "I saw that as an opportunity to get rid of three people at once. Do I feel bad about eliminating Sting?

No way! He had to be eliminated at some point!" ... WCW Commissioner Nick Bockwinkel said he was pleased with the battle royal. "A lot of people said to me things like, 'Bockwinkel, you're crazy. Some nobody's going to come away with the belt.' But I knew better. In wrestling, the cream always rises to the top."

—Compiled by the editors



Hogan and Savage shook hands a few minutes after the World War III battle royal, but just minutes later, Hulk tried to arrange a match with his pal.

of the WrestleMania IV WWF World title tournament when he helped Savage beat Ted DiBiase in the final. And Savage has privately complained to friends, "He keeps reminding me of that, like I'm going to owe him for the rest of his life. Can't he just drop it? I've done enough favors for him."

Meanwhile, there's the Hogan-Sting situation, which is threatening to become explosive. Their friendship could fall apart at any moment.

"At the very least, it's obvious that none of these three people trust each other," Sullivan said, not at all discouraged by the prospect. "And when there's lack of trust, everything starts falling apart very quickly. All part of my plan. Let WCW burn!"

Savage, Hogan, and Sting need counseling. You won't find Sullivan volunteering for the job. The Dungeon of Doom is at war with the WCW's fan favorites, but it doesn't have to fire any shots. These three pillars of power are self-destructing.



Luger is one reason the top WCW fan favorites are having so many problems amongst themselves. It's obvious he hates Savage and Hogan, yet Sting calls him a friend. These four may never be able to present a united front again!

THE X-FILES X-PLAINED

The February 1996 issue of *PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED* hit the stands just days after World War III. Hulk Hogan wasn't happy about what he read.

"You were had!" Hogan said to me. "Why didn't you come to me for a comment?"

It was a serious journalistic error. Why didn't I ask Hogan? Because I trusted Jimmy Hart, who was still Hogan's manager at press time for that issue. Big mistake.

The story, "Hulk Hogan's X-Files Unsealed!" was about a bunch of computer disks given to me by the "Mouth Of The South." The disks contained, or purported to contain, Hogan's deepest,

darkest secrets. In those files, Hogan described Sting as "a waste of talent" and added, "It's not like he's a real friend or anything." He called most of his former friends "backstabbers" and warned himself to watch out for Jimmy Hart.

Good advice. One month before the story hit the stands, Hart turned against Hogan.

I confronted Hart. "You're blaming me? You're the journalist. Check your facts, Rosenbaum!" Hart screeched. "You fell for my plan!"

He was right. He put one over on the old journalist. It won't happen again.

—Dave Rosenbaum

Photo by Steve Bryant

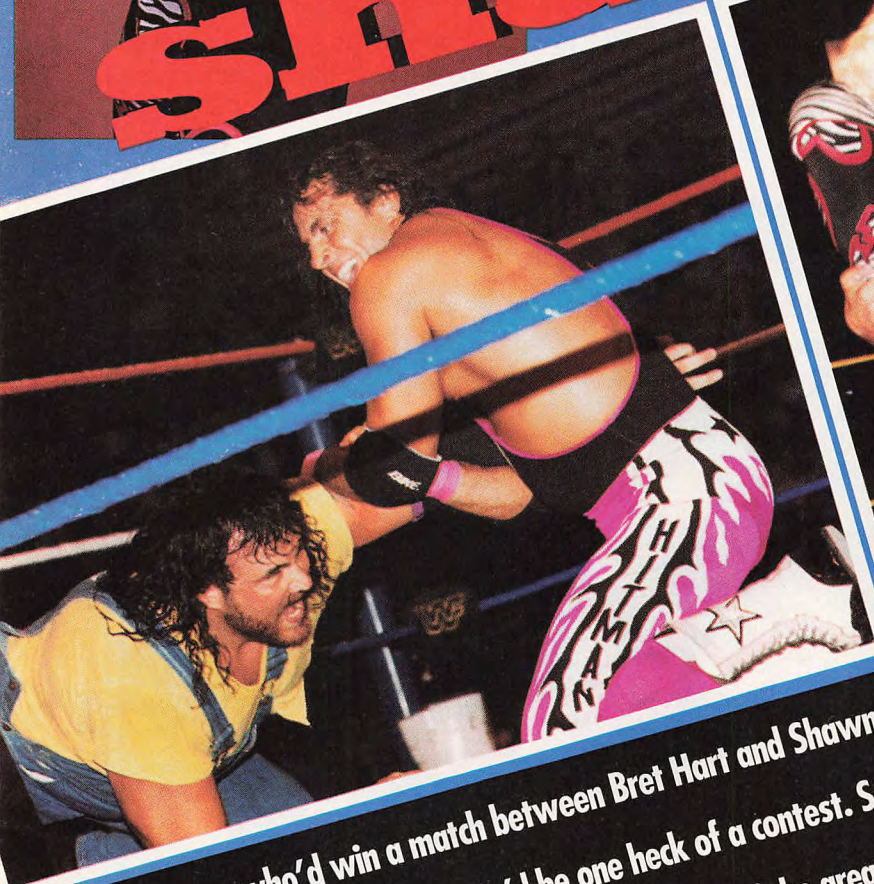


For years, Hogan and Hart trusted each other completely. But the way Hart misled us for a recent *PWI* story was unforgivable!

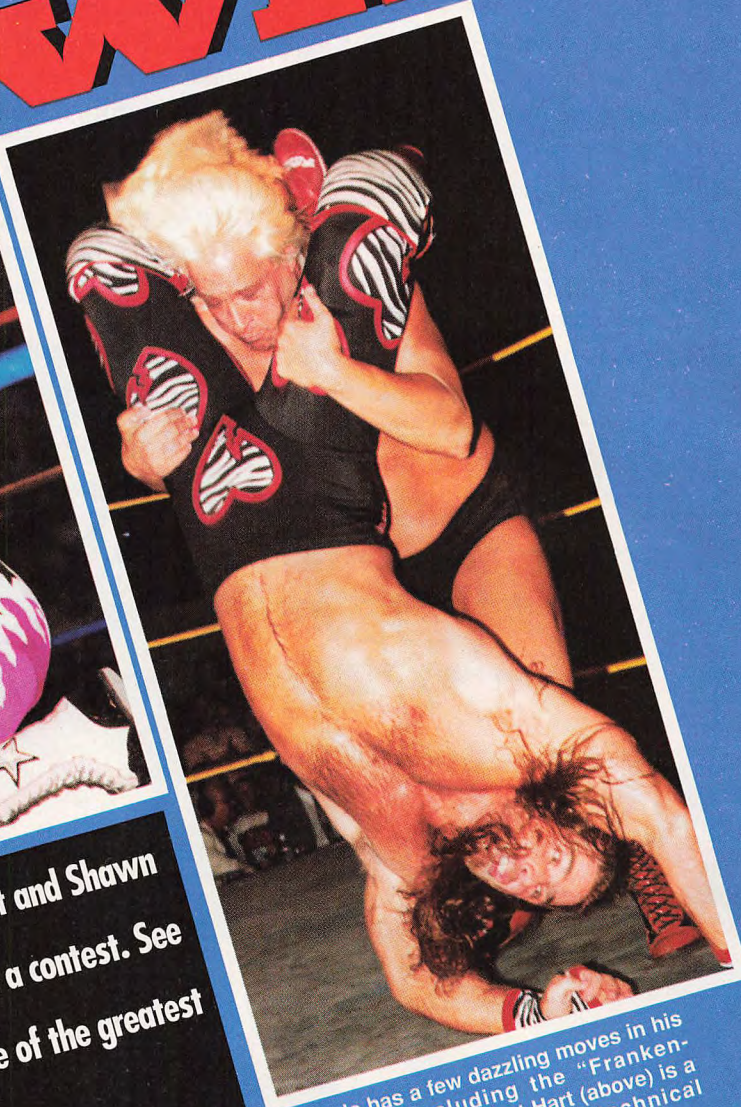
WHO'S BETTER

Our 10-Point System Reveals The Answer!

Shawn



No one knows who'd win a match between Bret Hart and Shawn Michaels today, but we do know it'd be one heck of a contest. See if you agree with our analysis of what could be one of the greatest encounters in WWF history



Michaels has a few dazzling moves in his repertoire, including the "Frankensteiner" (above left), but Hart (above) is a more solid and versatile technical wrestler.

r Bret?

By Dave Rosenbaum

WHEN BRET HART defeated Diesel at Survivor Series to capture his third WWF World championship, many of his fans said there was no longer any question about who the best wrestler in the WWF was. It's "The Hitman," they said. There are other fans who say Hart didn't prove that at all. Many are ardent Shawn Michaels' fans; they say they still have no doubts that *their* man, the three-time former Intercontinental champ, is the best in the federation.

For months, fans of both have been looking forward to settling the issue in the ring. They've wrestled each other before, but not with both men in their prime. Promoters were hoping to put it together early in '96. Then Michaels collapsed during a November 20 match. Suddenly, not only his career, but his life was in danger. Still, it is likely that these two greats will square off in a battle for supremacy up the line. Michaels is determined to return, and Hart is determined to prove himself a great World champion.

In a sort of preview, we've rated Hart and Michaels in 10 key categories. See if you agree with our analysis.

POWER

Neither Hart nor Michaels is a powerhouse in the classic sense, but each knows how to use his strength to full advantage. Typically their opponents outweigh them, but Hart and Michaels are rarely overpowered. The long hours in the gym have aided them in their ring endeavors. Hart is stronger, but not by much.

Edge: Hart

SPEED

Even The Kid has a hard time keeping up with these two; Hart and Michaels are among the quickest men in the sport. To avoid those big men, they need to be fast. Michaels, however, more often uses his speed as a weapon and is quicker to string moves together. He dazzles foes with his ability to bound off the ropes and attack them with flying forearm smashes or superkicks before they can think about responding.

Edge: Michaels

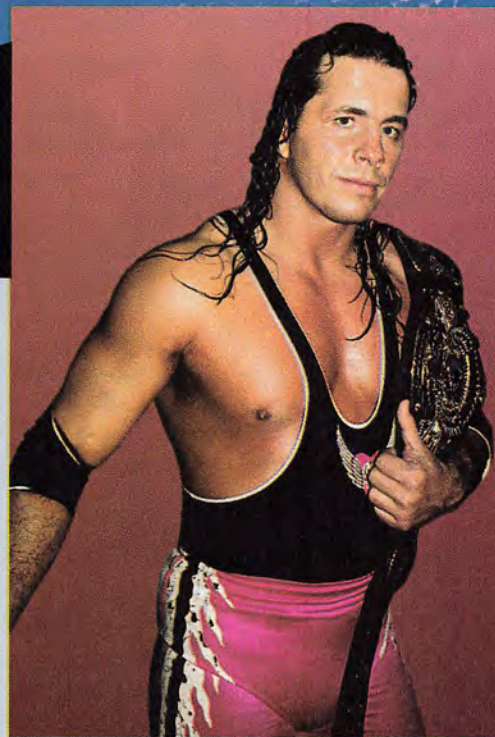
AGILITY

Both move around the ring well. They are well-schooled in the art of avoiding their foes' best moves. Superior agility is one of the things that makes Hart and Michaels so great. For Michaels, it is more of an advantage. Against all sorts of foes, he has demonstrated he is truly a fine athlete. So is Hart. The advantage to Michaels is not a significant one.

Edge: Michaels

SCIENTIFIC SKILLS

Hart and Michaels are masters of the game. They have trained with people who know the sport better than anyone. Both often end up brawling, but they have the wherewithal to contest a purely technical contest. Michaels, however, never prepared himself in "The Dungeon," the basement in the home of Bret's father, Stu. It was there Bret was forged into one of the finest mat technicians ever. He knows more leglocks and armlocks than Shawn, and we'll take his "sharpshooter"



over Shawn's superkick as a finisher. "The Excellence Of Execution" is for Hart the perfect motto.

Edge: Hart

AERIAL ABILITY

Michaels prides himself on his ability to soar. He enjoys executing flying bodypresses and flying elbowsmashes and gets a thrill out of leaping off the top turnbuckle onto an opponent. In fact, it seems as though he would be more comfortable wrestling that style more often. Hart, too, has a solid aerial game, though it's not a great part of his repertoire, and he is not particularly quick in coming off the top rope.

Edge: Michaels

ABILITY TO ABSORB PUNISHMENT

No one questions the toughness of these men. They have been bruised and battered, but they never retreat. As Michaels recently demonstrated, he is *too* willing to stand in there and take the abuse. Part of Hart's immense training



The "sharpsooter" (above) was the difference in some of the Hart-Michaels matches in '92, but Shawn had Bret on the ropes a few times (right). He'd need to use his edges in speed and aerial ability to beat "The Hitman" today.

was learning how to prepare his body to absorb hits. He even seems to gain strength from the ordeal.

Edge: Hart

STAMINA

Tell most wrestlers there's a good chance they'll be in the ring for 30 minutes and they might ask for a forfeit. Hart and Michaels are different. Both have the conditioning to last 60 minutes, and they'll do it without running out of energy. Hart, though, is better at pacing himself, so he usually is fresher in the late going. Michaels' faster pace would slow him just a bit near the end.

Edge: Hart

INTELLIGENCE

Aside from being stellar wrestlers, Hart and Michaels are dedicated students of the sport. They spend a lot of time working on their own weaknesses and scouting potential foes, and they know how to use that gained knowledge in the ring. Though Michaels rarely is outsmarted, Hart is better at thinking his way through the match, attempting to stay a

step or two ahead of his opponent. Michaels sometimes shows off too much.

Edge: Hart

RESOURCEFULNESS

During so many contests, both Hart and Michaels look like losers, then suddenly rally to earn a victory. It isn't difficult for them to come up with that one critical maneuver that turns the match in their favor. Michaels' craftiness was



apparent during his tremendous struggles for the Intercontinental title.

Edge: Michaels

WILL TO WIN

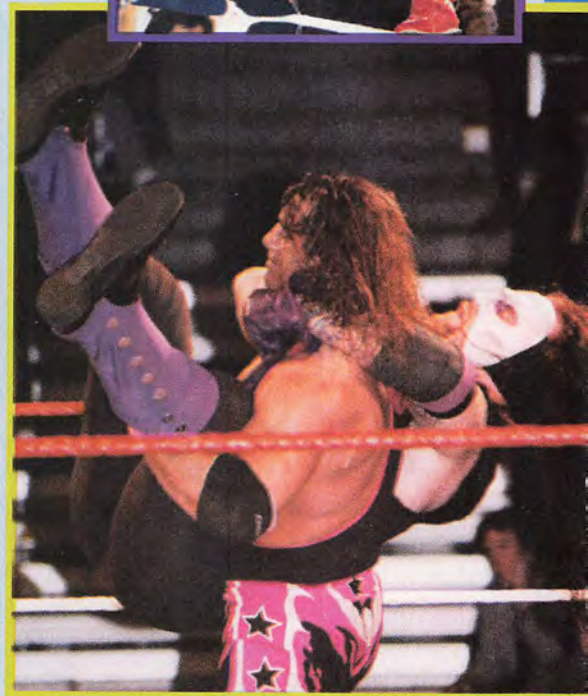
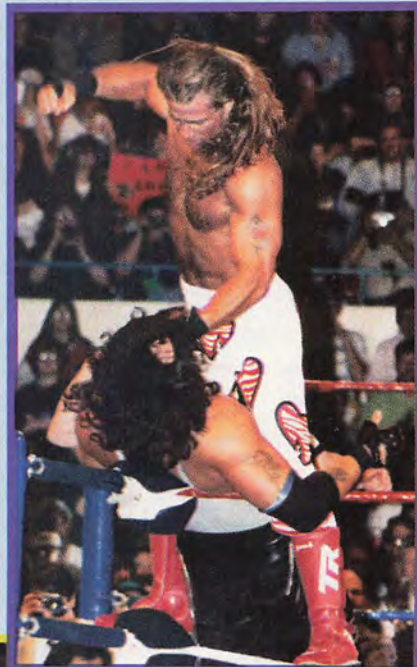
Both men hunger to be champions and stay champions. In the process, Michaels put his life in jeopardy. The difference here is that Hart has tasted WWF World championship glory; Michaels has not. "The Hitman" has

Shawn held his own against 7' Diesel at WrestleMania XI this year (top right), but we think Bret, who showed surprising strength in recent bouts with The Undertaker (right), would have the edge in a brawl.

pushed himself to that next level against incredible obstacles. No one doubts he wants the ultimate prize; Hart has just wanted it that much more.

Edge: Hart

Determining the outcome of this contest is not a matter of simple arithmetic. We gave Hart six categories and Michaels four, but that doesn't necessarily mean Hart would win the match. Instead, let our analysis be a guide to what will be a classic encounter, and what may be a legendary one! □



close-up: THE KID

AT 6'2" AND 212 pounds, The Kid hardly looks like the typical professional wrestler ... But he isn't typical: The six-year veteran is a high-flying, high-risk aerial artist who has scored several shocking upsets simply because he's willing to take chances ... Spent most of his early years competing for Minneapolis-based Pro Wrestling America ... As The Lightning Kid, he won the PWA light heavyweight title in both 1990 and 1991 ... Has also held the PWA tag team title (with Jerry Lynn) and the PWA TV title ... Moved to Texas and won the Global Wrestling Federation junior heavyweight title twice in the second half of '91 ... Later accepted an offer to wrestle in Japan and battled such superstars as Jushin Liger, El Samurai, Ultimo Dragon, and The Great Muta ... Lost most of those matches, but gained valuable experience ... Arrived in the WWF in April 1993 and hardly made a splash ... Lost his debut match to Louie Spicolli ... Also lost to mid-carders such as Doink the Clown and Mr. Hughes ... One week after the loss to Mr. Hughes, The Kid scored one of the biggest WWF upsets ever by pinning Razor Ramon at the May 17 *WWF Monday Night Raw* ... Kid seemed as shocked as everyone in the building ... From that point on, fans called him The 1-2-3 Kid ... Also pinned Terry Taylor and Ted DiBiase on several occasions ... Just as impressive were two victories over former AWA World champion Rick Martel ... Jerry Lawler started poking fun at him on segments of "King's Court" ... Moved up as high as fourth in the WWF ratings in 1993 ... Was pinned by Irwin R. Schyster at SummerSlam '93 ... Lost by countout to Marty Jannetty in a thrilling match on August 31, 1993, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Kid was injured when he misfired on a daring dive and hit a steel railing. Jannetty helped him back to the dressing room ... Went into a slump after suffering a series of embarrassing losses to Doink ... Also lost to Bastion Booger because of interference by Johnny Polo ... Polo pushed Kid off the top rope, leading to the pin ... Helped protect Ramon from an attack by Schyster, Diesel, Adam Bomb, and Martel after Ramon won his first Intercontinental title, on September 17, 1993 ... At the '93 Survivor Series, he teamed with Jannetty, Ramon, and Randy Savage to defeat IRS, Diesel, Martel, and Bomb ... Wrestled well, but made one mistake too many and lost a crucial *Raw* match against Shawn Michaels ... Michaels twice power-bombed Kid before Ramon came to his rescue ... Won his first major title on January 10, 1994, when he and Jannetty teamed to beat The Quebecers for the WWF World tag team title; Kid pinned Jacques following a flying bodypress from the top rope ... Lost the belts back to The Quebecers one week later ... Kid stunned Jeff Jarrett in the quarter-finals of the 1994 King of the Ring tournament, but was piledriven by "Double-J" three times afterward ... There was doubt as to whether Kid would be ready for the semifinals later that evening, but after a brief delay, he came out and lost a tough match to Owen Hart ... Owen went

on to win King of the Ring ... Had a thrilling match with WWF World champion Bret Hart on July 1, 1994. Kid kicked out of several pin attempts, shocked Bret with a spinning savate kick, but erred by trying a dropkick from the top rope. Bret moved out of the way, and Kid landed on his back. Bret won by submission to the "sharpshooter" ... In a battle of aerial artists on August 15, 1994, Kid won by disqualification over Owen Hart after Jim Neidhart interfered. Owen then locked Kid in a "sharpshooter" for several minutes ... Teamed with Ramon, Fatu, Davey Boy Smith, and Sionne to beat Jarrett, Diesel, Neidhart, Owen Hart, and Michaels at the '94 Survivor Series. The Kid, however, was one of the first wrestlers eliminated ... Teamed with newcomer "Man O' War" Aldo Montoya in matches against The Heavenly Bodies and others ... Teamed with Bob "Spark Plug" Holly to beat Bam Bam Bigelow and Tatanka in a

tournament final for the vacant WWF World tag team title at the '95 Royal Rumble ... But glory didn't last long. One night later in Palmetto, Florida, The Smokin' Gunns beat The Kid and Holly for the belts ... Continued teaming with Holly; they scored numerous victories over The Heavenly Bodies ... Seconded Ramon for his WrestleMania XI I-C title match against Jarrett and helped clear the ring of Jarrett and The Roadie after the match, which ended with "Double-J" being disqualified ... That started a new feud, with Ramon and The Kid going after Jarrett and Roadie. But in a tag team match on April 24, The Kid reagggravated a neck injury he suffered earlier in the month ... Was pinned by The Roadie in one of his earliest return matches ...

Was pinned by Hakushi at SummerSlam '95 ...

Trouble started brewing during a match between Ramon and Dean Douglas at the September 24 *In Your House* card ... Referee Tim White was hurt and out of position when Ramon had Douglas covered. Kid bounded into the ring and made a three-count for White; Ramon mistakenly thought the ref was counting and broke the cover, then shoved Kid out of the ring. Razor was then rolled up by Douglas for the pin ... Ramon threw Kid into the ring again, and the two traded blows ... Kid and Ramon shook hands after their match the next night at *Raw* and agreed to end their feud ... It was wishful thinking ... Ramon and Kid teamed to wrestle WWF World tag champions The Smokin' Gunns at *In Your House IV* ... They wrestled like rulebreakers and would have won had Ramon covered Billy Gunn after executing his "Razor's Edge" ... Ramon and Kid split after Kid refereed the Ramon vs. Sid Vicious match on October 23. He pulled Sid out of Ramon's "Razor's Edge," then made a fast three-count on Ramon, accepted some cash from Ted DiBiase, and left the ring ... Took on DiBiase as his manager and is now a full-blown rulebreaker who's no longer the fans' favorite underdog ... Look for him to team with Sid regularly in the near future.

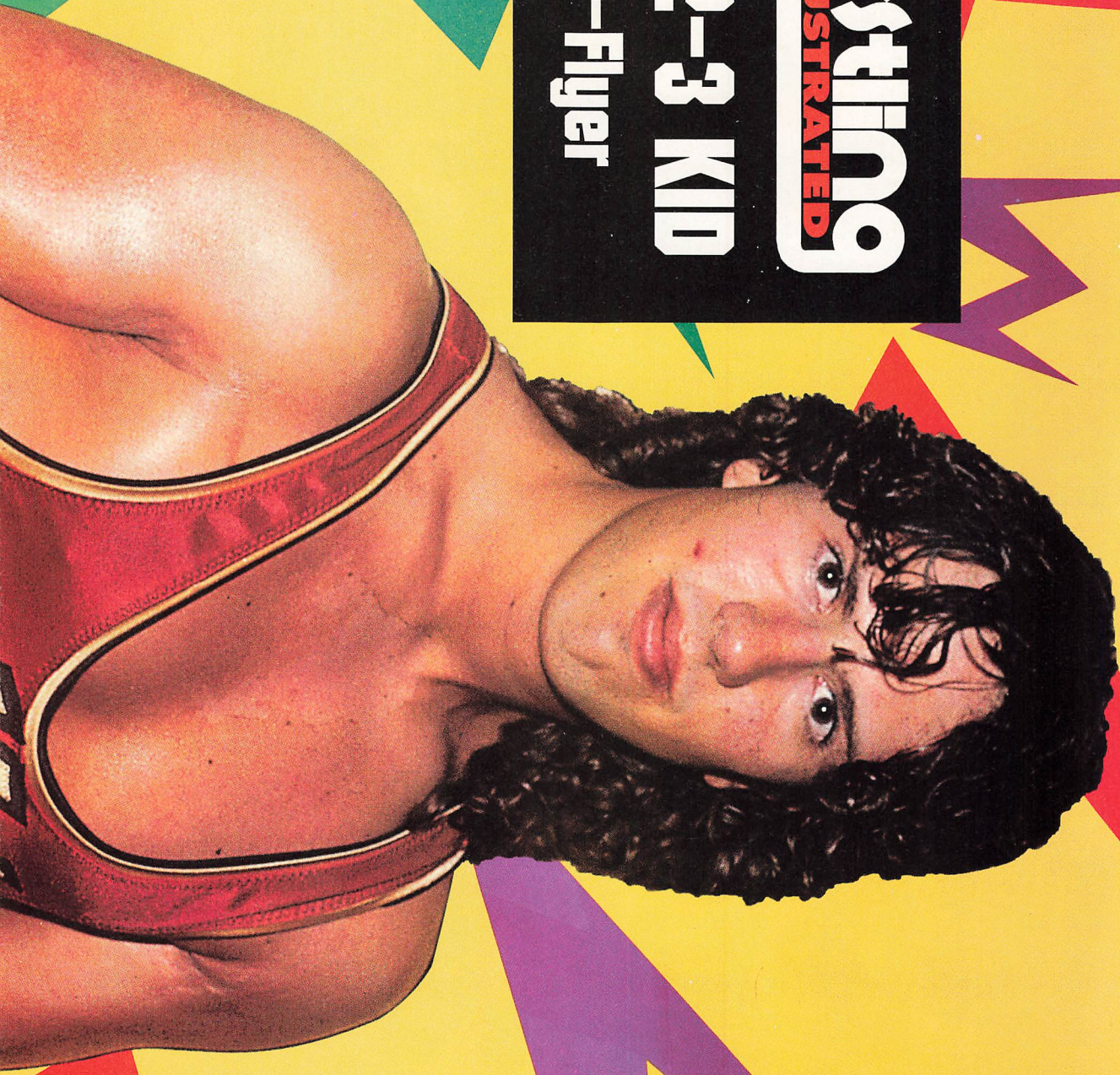




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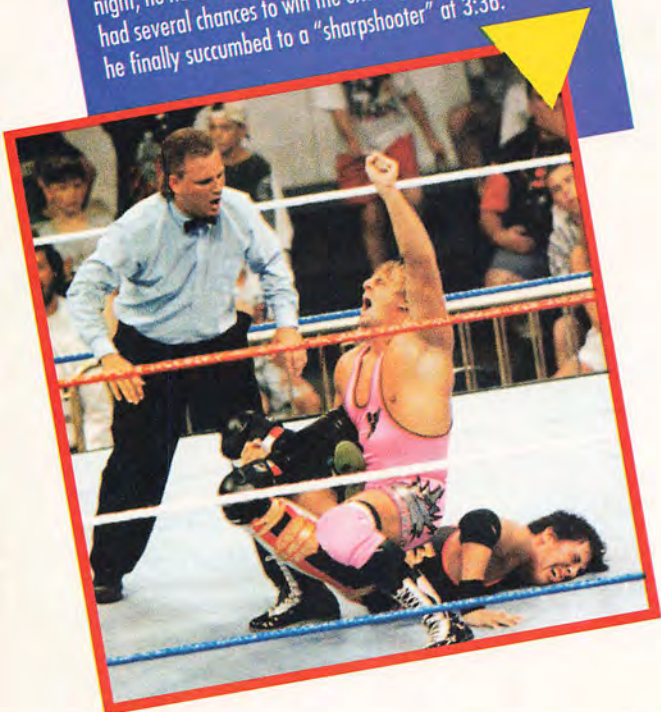
THE 1-2-3 KID

WWF High-Flyer



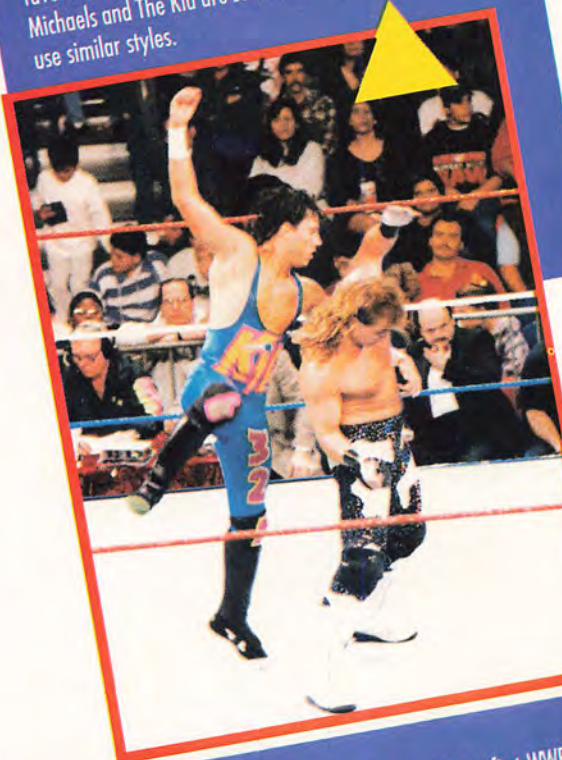
TOUGHEST OPPONENT

Owen Hart. They have met on several occasions, and Kid has yet to score a clean victory. The most heartbreaking defeat came at the 1994 King of the Ring tournament, when an injured Kid lost to Hart in the semifinals. Earlier in the night, he had been piledriven three times by Jeff Jarrett. Kid had several chances to win the exciting semifinal match, but he finally succumbed to a "sharpshooter" at 3:36.



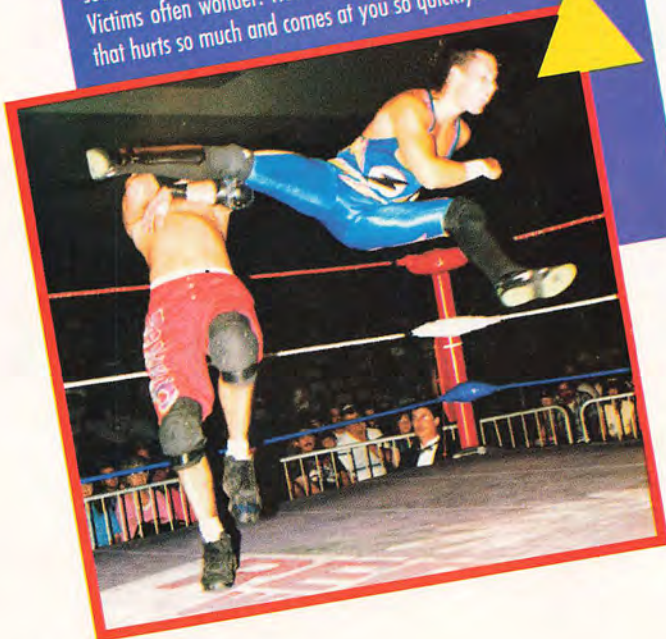
MOST HATED OPPONENT

Shawn Michaels. They've certainly had their differences over the years. Several years ago, Kid lost to Michaels on *Monday Night Raw*, and Michaels punctuated the win by twice power-bombing Kid. Razor Ramon came to his rescue. Though Kid is now a rulebreaker and Michaels a fan favorite, they still have their differences, probably because Michaels and The Kid are so alike. They have huge egos and use similar styles.



FAVORITE MOVE

Reverse spinning kick. Ask Kid to name his favorite move and he'll give you a long list. He has a lot of them in his repertoire. He loves climbing to the top rope and leaping at an opponent. But he seems to rely most upon a spinning kick that has incredible impact. Victims often wonder: How can a man so small execute a move that hurts so much and comes at you so quickly?



GREATEST MATCH

vs. Sabu, April 17, 1993. The Kid had just made his first WWF appearance in the WWF, and he hadn't impressed many people with a loss to Louie Spicolli. But they should have seen his match against Sabu on an independent card in Minnesota. It was an aerial spectacle in which both men looked like they were trying to destroy each other. After a few minutes, Kid had been bloodied. He won by DQ. When the bout was over, he knew he was ready for the WWF.



Their Violence Was Silenced!

PUBLIC ENEMY

**Gunned
Down In
The WWF**



Think Public Enemy and you think blood and violence. Think WWF and you think family-oriented sports entertainment. One night, the two styles stared each other down. Public Enemy blinked first—and lost a crucial match!

By Steve Anderson

AS THE TWO members of the tag team Public Enemy entered the USAir Arena on the afternoon of November 19, 1995, they knew things would be different. The arena was larger than what they were used to. The interior of the building was cleaner. There were more seats—about 15,000 or so more! Soon those seats would be filled by fans with kids. And the long press tables by the ring had been freshly polished.

“Now we can’t go and crash through them, can we, Johnny?” Rocco Rock said, admiring the shine.

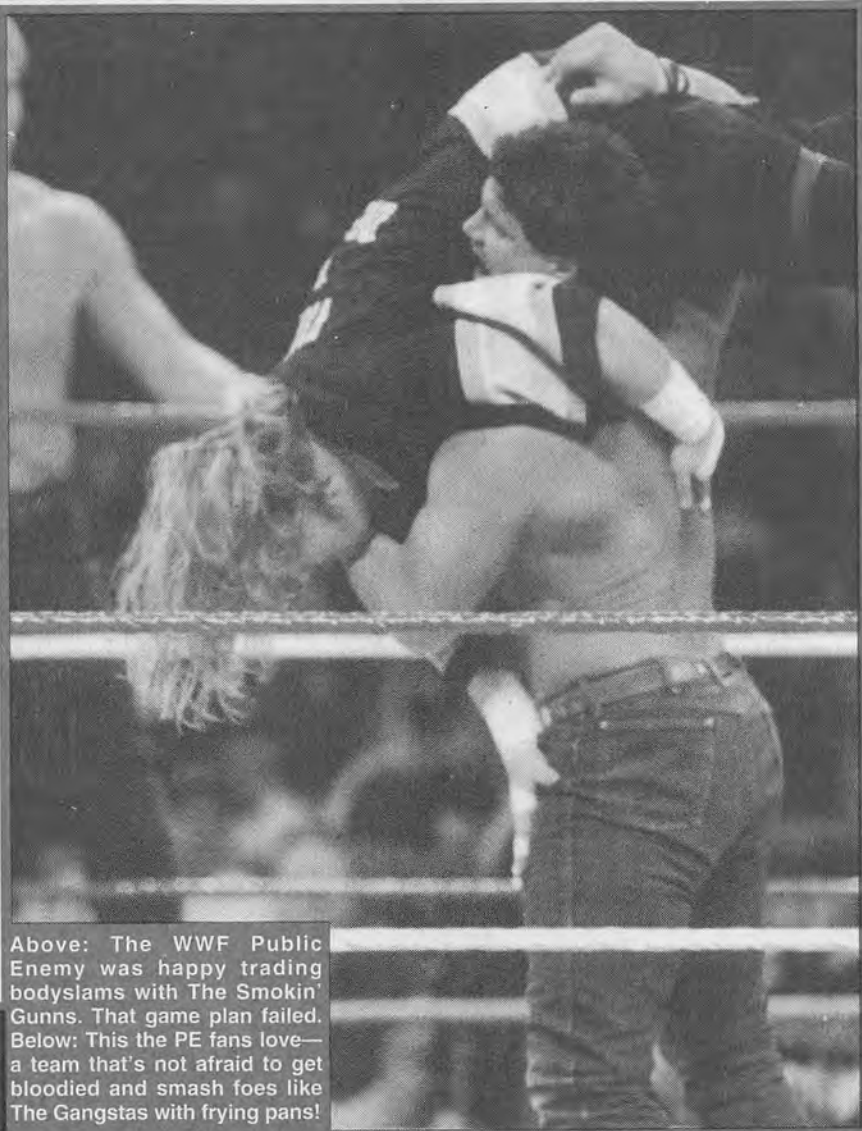
"You got a point there, Rocco," Johnny Grunge replied as he looked around the massive complex. "I guess we ain't in Kansas no more."

"But we ain't never been to Kansas, Johnny," responded a confused Rock.

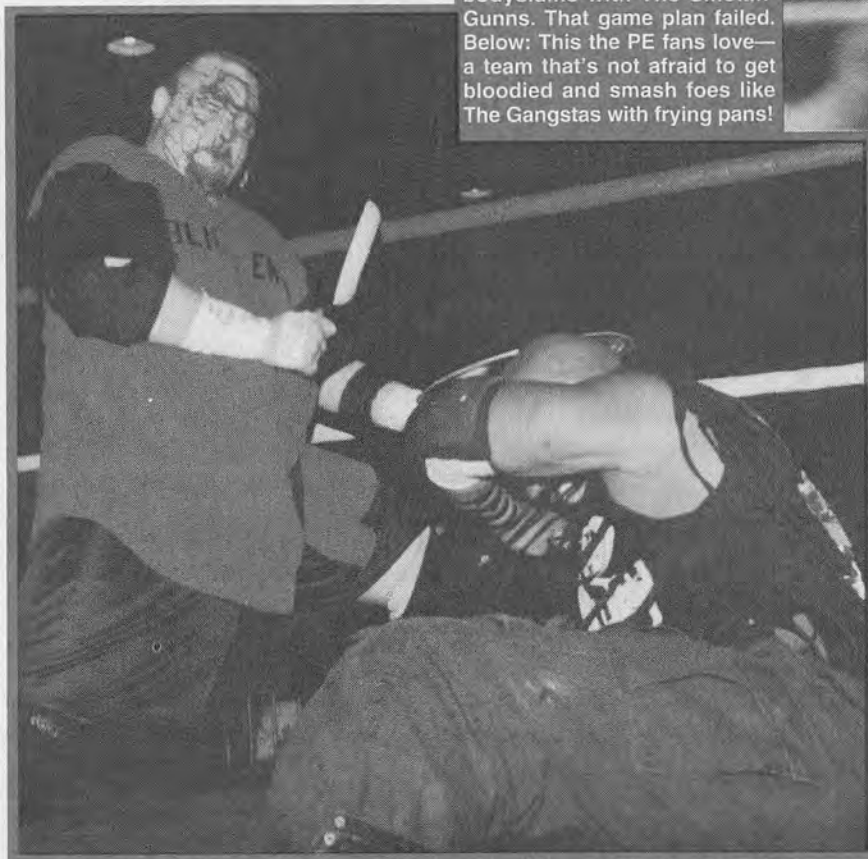
Grunge's paraphrased quote from *The Wizard Of Oz* referred to Public Enemy's WWF debut against WWF World tag team champions The Smokin' Gunns, in a match held before the telecast of the 1995 Survivor Series began. This was their chance to shine under the bright lights of wrestling's big top.

Grunge and Rock knew full well that the WWF would likely frown upon their usual tactics. But the dream of most American wrestlers is to make it to either the WWF or WCW. Rock and Grunge have that same dream, so in an attempt to appeal to WWF promoters, they toned down their violent style that night in Landover. They were never told to do so, but they figured they could beat the Gunns regardless, take the belts, and force the WWF to offer them a long-term contract.

The matchup itself was intriguing.



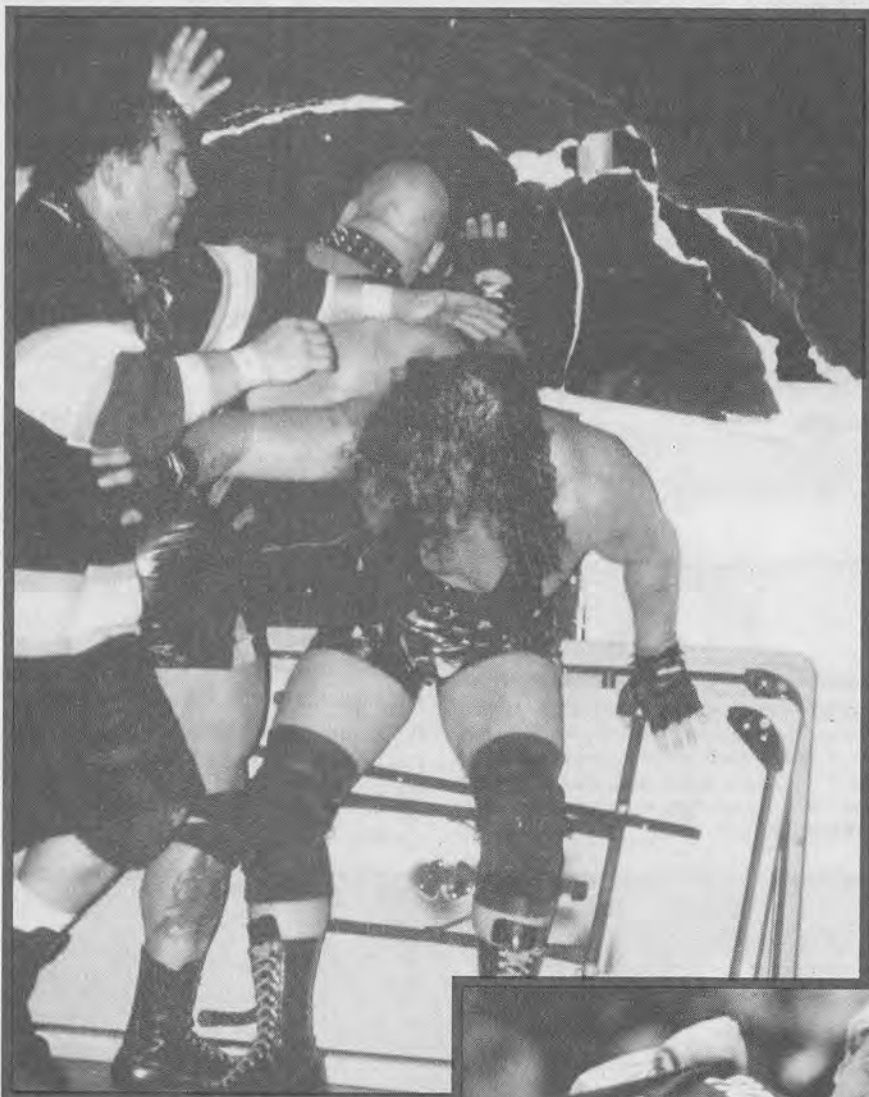
Above: The WWF Public Enemy was happy trading bodyslams with The Smokin' Gunns. That game plan failed. Below: This the PE fans love—a team that's not afraid to get bloodied and smash foes like The Gangstas with frying pans!



Although the Gunns are now two-time WWF World tag team champs, they've have never amassed a ground swell of support from fans or much respect from the media. Many believe they are simply the best of a mediocre crop of tag teams right now.

On the other hand, Public Enemy has developed an unusually large fan following for a team that competes in the independents. Rock and Grunge have helped to put the "Extreme" in Extreme Championship Wrestling. To those who follow ECW regularly, they are heroes. A move to either WCW or the WWF was a question of when, not if.

Ever since they entered ECW, Public Enemy has been spilling blood, bruising bodies, and breaking bones—both their opponents' and their own. They have



Above: On a typical night in ECW, Rocco Rock throws opponents like The Pit Bulls into walls and bounces them off tables. **Right:** At Survivor Series, he was doing his best just to counter Billy Gunn's hiptosses.

been successful in their brutality because ECW has created an environment that both encourages and rewards it. Naturally, promoters in the WWF took notice. An invitation to the Survivor Series was offered.

"They wanted us to prove ourselves by wrestling their tag champs," recalled Grunge. "They saw our dominance in ECW and thought maybe we could do the same in the WWF."

But Public Enemy knew what they were up against. Rock and Grunge were not oblivious to the fact that the WWF prefers to promote the kind of wrestling families can enjoy. No barbed-wire, no

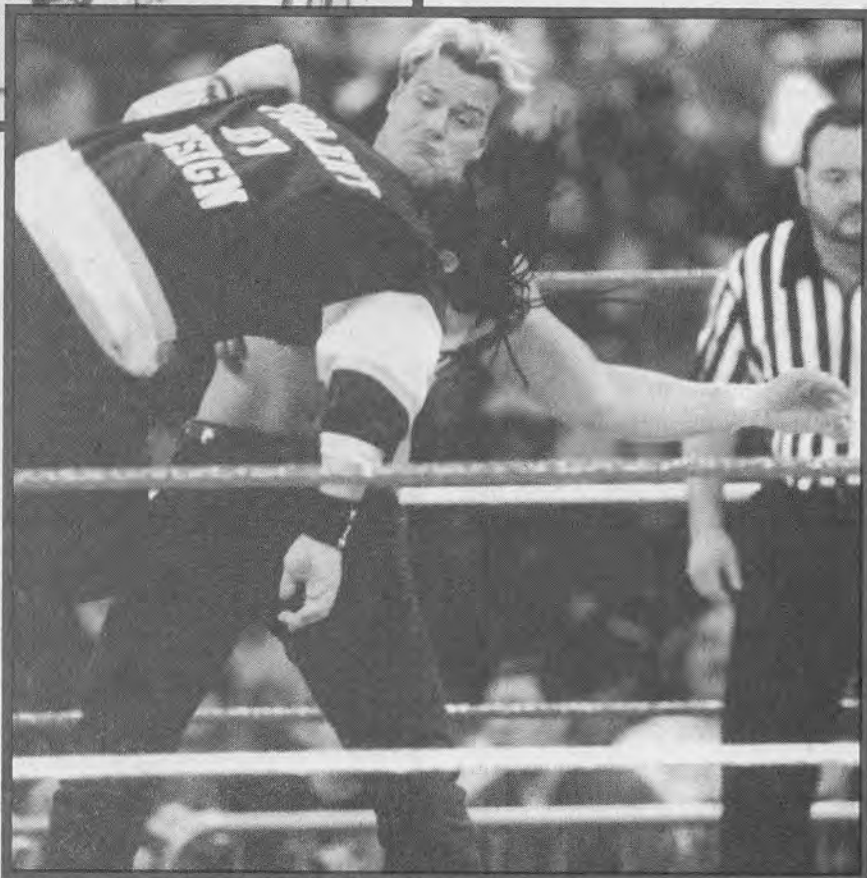
table-smashing matches, no flaming branding irons.

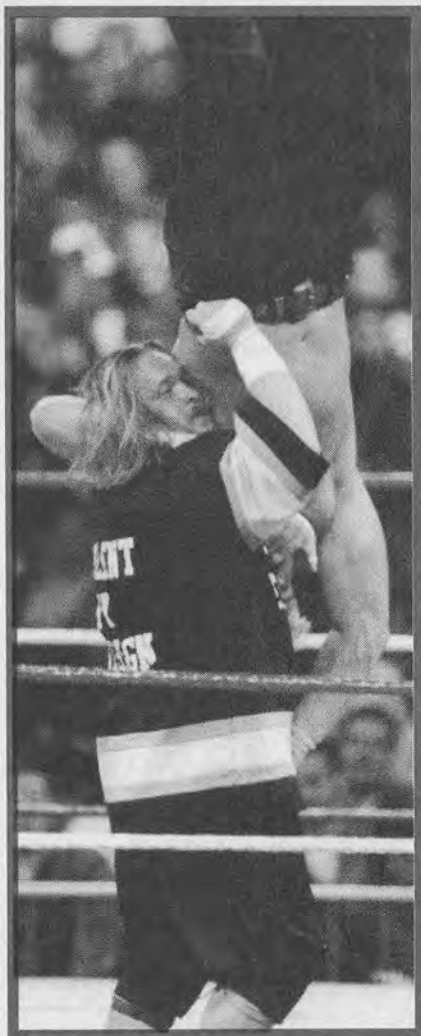
"We thought that since this was a one-time shot," said Rock, "that maybe we'd tone things down a little and show them we could do things their way. But it didn't quite work out."

"Didn't work out"? That's an understatement. A lot of fans cheered when Grunge and Rock entered the ring. Finally, the WWF had brought in hardcore wrestlers. But those cheers faded fast when fans realized the Public Enemy they were seeing that night wasn't the real Public Enemy.

Rock and Grunge came out losers in this all-important battle. They kept the match as competitive as they could, but in the end, the new style just didn't work for them. They would later admit that they were tempted to resort to the tactics they use in ECW, but it was obvious to everyone who saw the match that Rock and Grunge simply held back.

Many critics have rallied against the ultraviolent tactics of wrestlers like Rock and Grunge and have applauded PE for





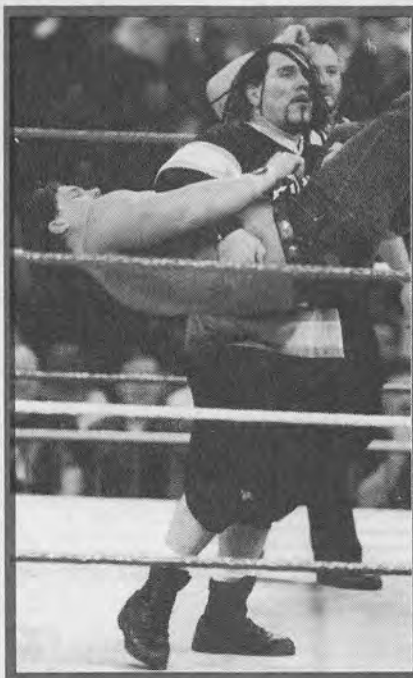
Not a bad vertical suplex for a blood-thirsty brawler such as Johnny Grunge, but wouldn't he have caused more problems for the Gunns had he been his usual violent self? He realizes now that the answer is yes.

wrestling a less extreme style in the WWF. But there is an old adage that says you should dance with the person who brought you to the dance. What brought Public Enemy to the forefront of tag team wrestling was their manic, reckless style. They strayed from their game plan for one night, and it cost them. On one very important night, they danced with someone else.

"We wanted to beat them—who wouldn't?" Grunge said minutes after the match. "We thought even if we changed our style, we could still win. Stupid!"

"I believe the word is 'ironic,' ain't that right, Johnny?" questioned Rock. "Ironic tonight, but never again."

"Never again, never again," contin-



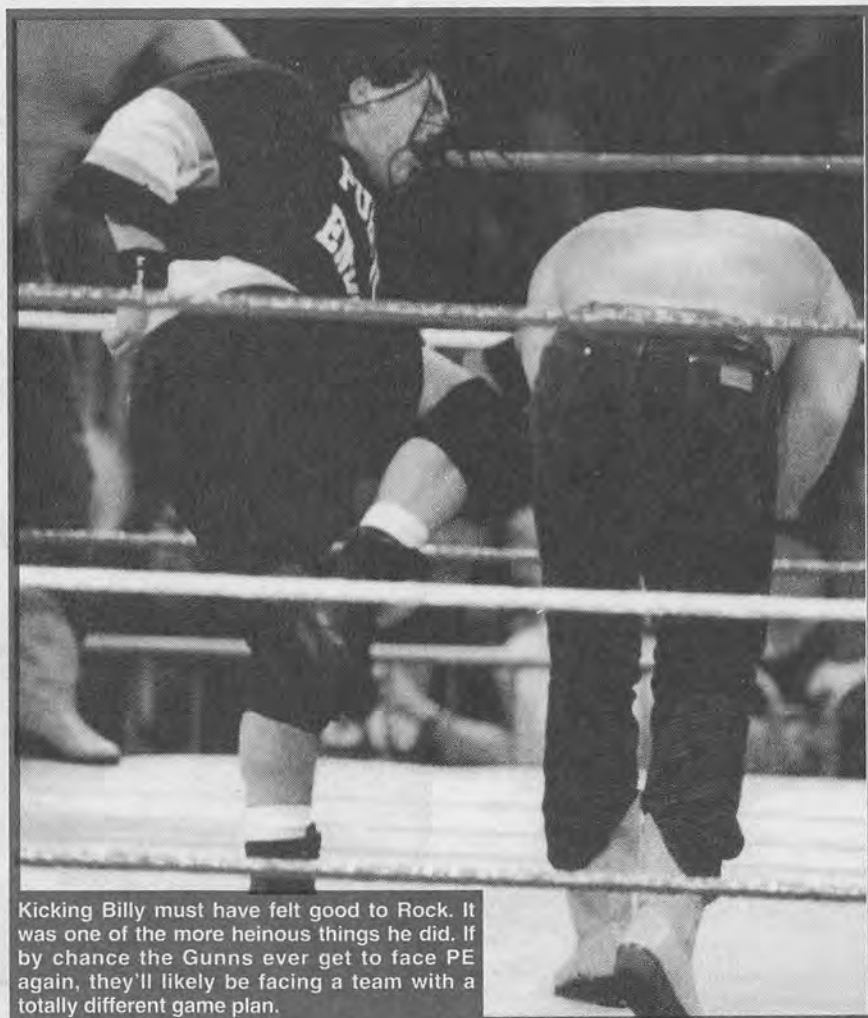
Rocco Rock executes a side-slam on Bart Gunn. He probably would have liked to have done this on top of a press table, or at least on the concrete floor. But he figured the WWF powers-that-be would frown upon such behavior.

ued Grunge. "The money, the fame, the titles, none of it matters. We'll never change for anyone again. If the WWF or WCW don't like it, they know what they can do about it!"

"We love to break tables and break wrestlers," said Rock. "Throw in a little blood and even fire for good measure. That's our game plan."

Public Enemy remains firm in its conviction not to change for anyone. When Rock and Grunge get to the WWF or WCW, many wrestlers mysteriously do change, in name, appearance, and/or personality. Shane Douglas became Dean Douglas. Dustin Rhodes became Goldust. The list just keeps growing.

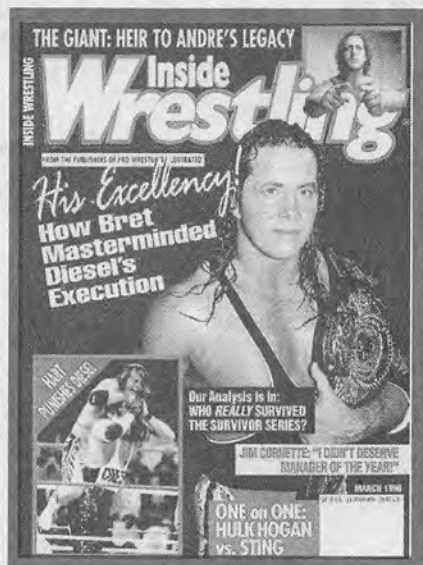
For now, you can keep Public Enemy off that list. These men like who they are, what they do, and how they're doing it. Oz might still await them—Rock and Grunge are now reportedly negotiating with WCW—but right now, ECW remains their Kansas. □



Kicking Billy must have felt good to Rock. It was one of the more heinous things he did. If by chance the Gunns ever get to face PE again, they'll likely be facing a team with a totally different game plan.

.....this month in.....

Inside Wrestling

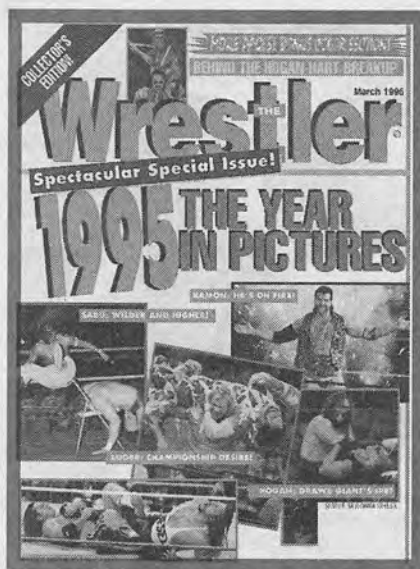


BRET HART is the "Excellence Of Execution" inside the ring, but he's a good strategist, too. We think you'll agree after reading how his plan to dethrone **DIESEL** worked to perfection ... So what if **THE GIANT** isn't **ANDRE'S** son. It looks like he has what it takes to become "the next Andre" anyway ... **EDDY GUERRERO** is flabbergasted. He wants to know why everyone is afraid to wrestle him! ... Can you believe it? **JIM CORNETTE** says he didn't deserve Manager of the Year!

All this—and much more!—in the March 1996 issue of *Inside Wrestling*



THE Wrestler



SPECIAL ISSUE!

How will you remember 1995? As the year former NFL great **LAWRENCE TAYLOR** shook up the WWF? As the year **HULK HOGAN** had some **GIANT** problems? As the year a civil war broke out in Tennessee? We've got plenty of memories for you in our special "Year In Pictures" section! ... Who did you feel was to blame in the ugly Hogan-**JIMMY HART** split? The fans we spoke to had some shocking opinions! ... Discover how **BIG VAN VADER** could turn out to be the savior of the WWF!

All this—and much more!—in the March 1996 issue of *The Wrestler*





arena reports

The results in "Arena Reports" are culled from a month's worth of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* newsletters. Readers of *PWI Weekly* received these results just days after the cards took place. If you would like to subscribe to *PWI Weekly*, see the ad elsewhere in this issue. If you would like to join professional wrestling's largest network of correspondents, write to: "Arena Report" c/o *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*, Box 1148, Ft. Washington, PA 19034.



UNITED STATES

ALABAMA

PIEDMONT—Southeastern Championship Wrestling at the National Guard Armory: **Kenny Arden** beat **Bobby Hayes** ... **Billy Montana** pinned **Archman** ... **David Young** beat **Jason Valentine** ... **Scott Armstrong** & **Lee Thomas** defeated **Billy Montana** & **Kenny Arden** ... **The Patriot** beat **Mr. Tennessee** by disqualification. (11-25-95)

—*Bill Needham*

ARKANSAS

JONESBORO—Ozark Mountain Wrestling at the National Guard Armory: **Billy McClarity** beat **Lee Hickerson** ... **Modern Day Cowboy** beat **Ric Burton** ... **Terry Golden** beat **Fred James** ... **J.R.**, **Bill Dundee**, & **Samantha Pain** beat **Billy Ray Hudson**, **Future Shock**, & **Debbie T. Wilde** ... **Bill Dundee** beat **Brickhouse Brown** ... **Billy McClarity** beat **Spanish Fly**. (11-11-95)

—*Aaron Mueller*

CALIFORNIA

LOS ANGELES—AAA at the Sports Arena: **Mascarita Sagrada**, **Octagoncito**, & **Super Munequito** beat **Espirititos I & II** & **Jerrito Estrada** ... **Angel Mortal**, **Mr. Condor**, **Marabunta**, & **Damian** beat **Boomerang**, **Discovery**, **Venom**, & **Thunderbird** ... **Rey Misterio Jr.**, **Perro Aguayo Jr.**, & **Frisbee** beat **Juventud Guerrera**, **Psicosis**, & **Picudo** ... **KGB**, **Killer**, **Pentagon**, & **Pierroth Jr.** defeated **Octagon**, **Super Calo**, **Mascara Sagrada**, & **La Parka** by disqualification ... **Tinieblas Jr.** beat **Chicano Power** in a mask vs. mask match ... **Konnar**, **Perro Aguayo Jr.**, & **Calo** defeated **Cibernético**, **Damian**, **Halloween**, **Psicosis**, & **Juventud Guerrera**. (12-09-95)

—*Lorena Hernandez*

COLORADO

DENVER—WCW at the Coliseum: **Alex Wright** beat **Disco Inferno** ... **Bobby Eaton** & **Lord Steven Regal** beat **Bunkhouse Buck** & **Dick Slater** ... TV champion **Johnny B. Badd** beat

Dallas Page ... **Lex Luger** beat **Mr. J.L.** ... World tag team champions **Harlem Heat** beat **Marcus Alexander Bagwell** & **Scotty Riggs** ... **Sting** beat **Kurasawa** ... **The Giant** beat **Scott Norton** ... **The Giant** won a battle royal. (12-02-95)

—*Peter Mayes*

FLORIDA

MIAMI—NWA at Joe Robbie Stadium: **Bobby Rogers** beat **Blare Rogers** ... **Phi Delta Slam** beat **Dan Evans** ... **Rage** beat **Les Adams** ... **Rusty Brooks** & **Lethal Luther** beat **Mr. New York** & **Blaze Bigelow** ... **Death Row 3260** defeated boxer **Razor Robinson** in a boxer vs. wrestler match ... **Craig Kay** & **Frank E. Herman** beat **Billy Bob Brownie** & **Demon Hellstorm** ... **Junkyard Dog** beat **Dr. Red Roberts**. (11-24-95)

—*Lydia Fernando*

GEORGIA

ROSSVILLE—Tri-Star Wrestling at the TWA Arena: **Roger Sartin** beat **Samurai Dragon** ... **Chuck Colt** defeated **Johnny Quaz** by disqualification ... **Mr. Pain** defeated **Larry Santana** ... **Rick Justice** & **Scott James** beat **Joey Funk** & **The Dragon** ... **Mike Collins** & **Jimmy Sharpe** defeated **Joel Travis** & **Frankie the Crippler**. (12-08-95)

—*Donald Newberry*

CHATSWORTH—World Christian Federation at Spring Palace: **Ricky Roberts** beat **Dwight Thompson** ... **Kenny Dee** pinned **Terry Phoenix** ... **Big Bubba Humphries** beat **Johnny Arden** ... **Jamie Strong** pinned **Kevin Walker** ... **Billy Montana** & **Kenny Arden** beat **Big Bubba Humphries** & **Bubbles The Clown**. (11-24-95)

—*Bill Needham*

ILLINOIS

CHICAGO—WWF at the United Center: **Ahmed Johnson** defeated **Rad Radford** ... **Kama**, **Isaac Yankem**, & **Skip** beat **Barry Horowitz**, **Hakushi**, & **Doink** ... **Goldust** defeated **Bob Holly** ... **Hunter Hearst Helmsley** beat **Henry Godwinn** ... World tag team champs **The Smokin' Gunns** beat **Owen Hart** & **Yokozuna** ... Intercontinental champion **Razor Ramon** beat **Sid Vicious** ... **Davey Boy Smith** defeated **Diesel** by disqualification ... World champion **Bret Hart** wrestled **The Undertaker** to a double-countout. (12-09-95)

—*Kyle Mattison*

CHICAGO—Windy City Wrestling at the Rowan Park Field House: **Mike Anthony** pinned **Blue Thunder** ... **Frank Melson** defeated **Spike** by disqualification ... Lightweight champion **Brandon Bishop** pinned **Steve Boz** ... Middleweight champion **Ripper Manson** defeated **Ivan Urkoff** ...

Tag team champions **The Texas Hangmen** beat **The Steele Brothers** ... Heavyweight champion **Mike Samson** pinned league champion **Turbo** (only Samson's belt was on the line). (12-02-95)

—*Steve Cain*

INDIANA

FORT WAYNE—WWF at the Allen County War Memorial: **Doink**, **Fatu**, & **Hakushi** beat **Kama**, **Isaac Yankem**, & **Rad Radford** ... **Goldust** beat **Barry Horowitz** ... **The Kid** beat **Marty Jannetty** ... **Savio Vega** beat **Bob Backlund** ... **Ahmed Johnson** beat **Skip** by disqualification ... **Hunter Hearst Helmsley** beat **Henry Godwinn** ... **Sid Vicious** beat Intercontinental champion **Razor Ramon** by countout ... **Davey Boy Smith** beat **Diesel** by disqualification ... World tag team champions **The Smokin' Gunns** beat **Owen Hart** & **Yokozuna** ... World champion **Bret Hart** beat **The Undertaker** by disqualification. (12-02-95)

—*Kyle Tucker*

MASSACHUSETTS

TEWKSBURY—CWA at the High School: **The Dungeon Master** beat **The Hollywood Flash** ... **Little Louie** beat **King Slezzy** ... **The Coroner** beat **Mark Fabian** ... **Misty Blue Simmes** beat **Nasty Sherri** ... **Vic Steamboat** beat **Jose Valenzuela** ... **El Mascarado** wrestled **The Falcon** to a draw ... **Tito Santana** beat **Knuckles Nelson** by disqualification ... **Tony Atlas** beat **Kevin Sullivan** by disqualification. (12-02-95)

—*Jan Ross*

WORCESTER—WWF at the Centrum: **Fatu** pinned **Aldo Montoya** ... **Kama** beat **Tony Roy** ... **Ahmed Johnson** beat **Mo** ... **Savio Vega** beat **Isaac Yankem** ... **Goldust** pinned **Marty Jannetty** ... **Hunter Hearst Helmsley** beat **Henry Godwinn** ... **Owen Hart** defeated **Hakushi** ... World tag team champions **The Smokin' Gunns** beat **Rad Radford** & **Skip** ... Intercontinental champion **Razor Ramon** beat **Dean Douglas** ... **Shawn Michaels**, **Bret Hart**, & **Diesel** beat **Mabel**, **Yokozuna**, & **Davey Boy Smith**. (11-11-95)

—*Michael J. DiMuzio*

MICHIGAN

AUBURN HILLS—WWF at the Palace: **Fatu**, **Barry Horowitz**, & **Hakushi** defeated **Isaac Yankem**, **Skip**, & **Kama** ... **Goldust** defeated **Bob Holly** ... **The Kid** defeated **Marty Jannetty** ... **Ahmed Johnson** defeated **Rad Radford** ... **Sid Vicious** beat Intercontinental champion **Razor Ramon** by countout ... **Hunter Hearst Helmsley** defeated **Henry Godwinn** ... **Savio Vega** beat **Bob Backlund** ... **Davey Boy Smith** defeated **Diesel** by disqualification ... World tag team champions **The Smokin' Gunns** defeated **Owen Hart** &

Yokozuna ... The Undertaker defeated World champion **Bret Hart** by disqualification. (12-03-95)

—Jack Davis

MINNESOTA

LINDSTROM—Northern Premier Wrestling at the Scoreboard Lounge: **Charlie Norris & Tom Zenk** defeated **Lenny Lane & J.B. Trask** ... **Horace the Psychopath** beat **Todd Becker** ... **Dan Jessor** defeated **The Nightstalker** ... **The Mangler** beat **The Kamikaze Kid**. (12-04-95)

—John Wilson

ROSEMOUNT—Pro Wrestling America at the Rosemount Community Center: **Sampson** defeated **The Mangler** by disqualification ... **Horace the Psychopath** pinned Northern Premier Wrestling heavyweight champion **J.B. Trask** in a non-title match ... **Charlie Norris** beat **Randall Gusto** ... **Kenny Jay** defeated **PWA** heavyweight champion **The Hater** by disqualification ... **Mike Enos & Tom Zenk** defeated **The Blacktop Bully & Nailz**. (11-11-95)

—Ron Hargood

NEW JERSEY

CLARK—International Fighting Network at Arthur R. Johnson High School: **Jim Powers** defeated **Skull Von Crush** ... **Virgil** defeated **Damien Stone** ... **The Italian Connection** beat **H.D. Ryder & Kodiak Bear** ... **Jimmy Snuka** beat **The Metal Maniac** ... **NWA North American** champion **Tommy Cairo** beat **Akida Kaos** ... **Keith Shearer** beat **Hugh Morris**. (12-02-95)

—John Raymond

NEW YORK

NEWBURGH—North East Wrestling at Central Valley High School: **Tony DiVito** won a battle royal ... **Brutus Beefcake** defeated **J.L. Storm** ... **Primo Carnara III** beat **Tony DiVito** ... **Half Nelson** defeated **Tiny the Terrible** in a midgets match ... **Johnny Handsome** defeated **Super Nova** ... **Ray Odyssey** beat **Mayhem** ... **Fatu** pinned **Abdullah Singh** ... **Bam Bam Bigelow** pinned **Mo**. (12-09-95)

—Timothy A. Walker

NEW YORK—WWF at Madison Square Garden: **Fatu, Barry Horowitz, & Hakushi** defeated **Isaac Yankem, Skip, & Kama** ... **Goldust** defeated **Bob Holly** ... **The Kid** beat **Marty Jannetty** ... **Ahmed Johnson** defeated **Rad Radford** ... **Sid Vicious** beat **Intercontinental** champ **Razor Ramon** by countout ... **Hunter Hearst Helmsley** beat **Henry Godwinn** ... **Savio Vega** beat **Isaac Yankem** ... **Davey Boy Smith** beat **Diesel** by disqualification ... **World tag team** champions **The Smokin' Gunns** beat **Owen Hart & Yokozuna** ... **The Undertaker** defeated **World** champion **Bret Hart** by disqualification. (11-25-95)

—Donna Colman

NORTH CAROLINA

LEDGAR—Southern States Wrestling at the High School: **Super Mario** pinned **Iceman** ... **The Equalizer** pinned **Freight Train Ford** ... **Dan Cooley** pinned **K.C. Thunder** ... **David Jericho & Danny Cooley** beat **The Beautiful Blondes** ... **Alan Ward** beat **Frank Parker** ... **Jimmy Valiant** pinned **Major DeBeers** ... **Beau James & Ricky Morton** defeated **tag team** champions **Death & Destruction** to win the title. (12-09-95)

—Fay Ferguson

SMITH GROVE—AIWF at the Community Center: **Johnny Reb & Major Breakinridge** beat **The Superstar & Skull Von Schultz** ... **Regina**

Hale beat **Candi Devine** ... **Chris Windham** beat **Bad Brad** ... **Bad Brad & Candi Devine** beat **Jumpin' Jimmy & Regina Hale** ... **King Cobra** beat **lightweight** champion **Brian Danzig** by disqualification ... **Jumpin' Jimmy** beat **Mr. Excellent** ... **Rick Deeze** beat **Jammer** in a falls-count-anywhere match ... **The Tennessee Violence Authority** beat **tag team** champions **The Ghostriders** to regain the belts. (12-09-95)

—Dean Puckett

GREENSBORO—Mid-Atlantic Wrestling at Grimsley High School: **Johnny Capone** wrestled **Nightbreed** to a draw ... **Headbanger Mosh** pinned **Willow the Wisp** ... **Venom** beat **High Voltage** ... **The Diamond Exchange** defeated **tag team** champions **The Ringbusters** by disqualification ... **Buddy Landell** beat **heavyweight** champion **Timber the Lumberjack** by disqualification ... **Buddy Landell** won a battle royal. (12-08-95)

—Joe Wheeler

CONCORD—Carolina Championship Wrestling at the High School: **Gary Royal** beat **Kevin Kirby** ... **Rick Link** defeated **Billy Simmons** ... **Colt Steele** beat **Chris Hamrick** ... **L.A. Stephens** defeated **Rick Link** by disqualification ... **Rikki Nelson** defeated **Willie Clay** ... **Rick Morton** defeated **Gary Royal** ... **Colt Steele** beat **L.A. Stephens** ... **Rikki Nelson** beat **Rick Morton** ... **Colt Steele** defeated **Rikki Nelson** in the finals of a tournament for the vacant **CCW** **heavyweight** title to win the belt. (12-02-95)

—Dan Parris

TAYLORSVILLE—AIWF's "Thanksgiving Slamfest '95" at the National Guard Armory: **Superstar** beat **Major Breakinridge** ... **Ron Rossi** beat **Johnny Reb** by disqualification ... **Rick Deeze** beat **Bad Brad** in a **lumberjack** match ... **The Intimidator** beat **Red Scorpion** ... **Chris Windham** beat **Brian Danzig** in a **dog-collar** match ... **Tag team** champions **The Tennessee Violence Authority** wrestled **The Ghost Riders** to a double-countout ... **Jackie Anderson** won a **bunkhouse** battle royal. (11-25-95)

—Dean Puckett

FOREST CITY—PWF at the Armory: **Madd Maxxine** defeated **The Hillbilly** ... **Russian Assassin II** defeated **Tyrone Knox** ... **Tag team** champions **Scotty McKeever & George South** beat **Carolina Dreamer & Randy Sledge** ... **Heavyweight** champion **Italian Stallion** beat **The Barbarian** ... **Cruel Connection II** won a battle royal. (11-24-95)

—Brock Chandler

HIGH POINT—Atlantic Championship Wrestling at Trinity Senior High School: **Heavyweight** champion **Jimmy Garvin** defeated **Greg Valentine** ... **The Terminators & Rick Link** defeated **The Heartbreak Express & Bonecrusher** ... **Mad Dog Davidson** defeated **American** champion **Tim Blaze** to win the title ... **Tag team** champions **The East Coast Connection** defeated **Billy Jack Black & Les Parker** ... **Debbie Combs** beat **Robbie Rage**. (11-11-95)

—Brian Powell

LENOIR—Smoky Mountain Wrestling at the Mulberry Street Recreational Center: **Robert Gibson** beat **Ron Davis** ... **Tracey Smothers** beat **Terry Gordy** ... **Tag team** champions **The Heavenly Bodies** defeated **Tracey Smothers & Tony Anthony** ... **Buddy Landell** beat **Tommy Rich** in a steel cage match. (11-09-95)

—Frank Miller

OHIO

SPRINGFIELD—IWA TV taping at the Freedom Road Center: **Ivory Nichols** battled **Shawn Casey** to a draw ... **Savannah Slim** won a four-corners match over **Devil Dog, The Wrecker, & Bull Miller** ... **Light** **heavyweight** champion **Jesse Salica** beat **Curtis Taylor** ... **The Gravedigger** beat **Biff Beverly** ... **Ivory Nichols & Shawn Casey** beat **Jesse Salica & Maniac Mark** ... **Heavyweight** champion **Bull Miller** beat **Paul Harley** in a non-title match ... **Biff Beverly** beat **Curtis Taylor** ... **Kenny Hendrix & The Wrecker** defeated **tag team** champion **Savannah Slim** in a handicap match to win the title (Slim's partner, **Hollywood Hubie**, didn't show). (12-09-95)

—Jeff Gorman

CLEVELAND—WWF at Gund Arena: **Barry Horowitz, Hakushi, & Fatu** defeated **Isaac Yankem, Kama, & Steve Lombardi** ... **Goldust** defeated **Bob Holly** ... **The Kid** defeated **Marty Jannetty** ... **Savio Vega** pinned **Bob Backlund** ... **Ahmed Johnson** beat **Rad Radford** ... **Hunter Hearst Helmsley** pinned **Henry Godwinn** ... **Davey Boy Smith** beat **Diesel** by disqualification ... **World tag team** champions **The Smokin' Gunns** beat **Owen Hart & Yokozuna** ... **World** champion **Bret Hart** beat **The Undertaker** by disqualification. (12-01-95)

—Jeff Gorman

COLUMBUS—WWF at the Convention Center: **Savio Vega** beat **Jean-Pierre Lafitte** ... **Ahmed Johnson** beat **Rad Radford** ... **Fatu** defeated **Steve Lombardi** ... **Bob Backlund** beat **Bob Holly** ... **Goldust** defeated **Marty Jannetty** ... **Hunter Hearst Helmsley** beat **Henry Godwinn** ... **Isaac Yankem** beat **Bam Bam Bigelow** ... **World tag team** champions **The Smokin' Gunns** beat **Sid Vicious & Kama** ... **Intercontinental** champion **Razor Ramon** beat **Owen Hart** ... **Diesel, Shawn Michaels, & Bret Hart** defeated **Yokozuna, Mabel, & Davey Boy Smith**. (11-08-95)

—Heath Peterson

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA—ECW at the ECW Arena: **Dances With Dudley & Bubba Ray Dudley** beat **The Bad Crew** ... **Taz** (with **Bill Alfonso**) defeated **El Puerto Ricano** ... **Hack Myers** pinned **Bruiser Mastino** ... **The Eliminators** (with **Jason**) beat **The Pit Bulls** ... **Raven** defeated **Tommy Dreamer** ... **J.T. Smith** pinned **The Broad Street Bully** ... **The Sandman** defeated **heavyweight** champion **Mike Whipwreck** and **Steve Austin** in a triangle match to win the title ... **Public Enemy** defeated **The Heavenly Bodies** ... **The Pit Bulls, Public Enemy, & Tommy Dreamer** beat **Raven, Stevie Richards, The Eliminators, & The Heavenly Bodies** in a steel cage match. Since **Richards** was the man pinned, he had to spend five minutes in the cage with the winners afterward. (12-09-95)

—Bart Orkline & Michael J. DiMuzio

PHILADELPHIA—WWF at the CoreStates Spectrum: **Barry Horowitz, Hakushi, & Fatu** defeated **Kama, Isaac Yankem, & Skip** ... **Ahmed Johnson** beat **Rad Radford** ... **The Kid** pinned **Aldo Montoya** ... **Goldust** defeated **Bob Holly** ... **Sid Vicious** beat **Intercontinental** champion **Razor Ramon** by countout ... **Hunter Hearst Helmsley** pinned **Henry Godwinn** ... **Savio Vega** defeated **Dean Douglas** by disqualification ... **World tag team** champions **The Smokin' Gunns** defeated **Yokozuna & Owen Hart** ... **World** champion **Bret Hart** defeated **The Undertaker** by disqualification. (11-24-95)

—Michael J. DiMuzio

PITTSBURGH—WWF at the Civic Center: Barry Horowitz, Hakushi, & Fatu beat Skip, Isaac Yankem, & Kama ... Goldust beat Bob Holly ... The Kid beat Marty Jannetty ... Savio Vega defeated Bob Backlund ... Ahmed Johnson beat Rad Radford ... Sid Vicious beat Intercontinental champ Razor Ramon by countout ... Hunter Hearst Helmsley beat Henry Godwinn ... Davey Boy Smith beat Diesel by disqualification ... World tag team champs The Smokin' Gunns defeated Owen Hart & Yokozuna ... World champion Bret Hart wrestled The Undertaker to a double-countout. (12-08-95)

—Alan Boxwood

READING—Pennsylvania Championship Wrestling at Stokesay Castle: American Commonwealth Wrestling light heavyweight champion Johnny Graham beat Race Richards III (with Judd the Stud) ... Kevin King pinned Sammy Garr ... The Midnight Rocker beat Judd the Stud by disqualification ... Tag team champions Jimmy Deo & Maxx Crimson (with Capt. Lou Albano) defeated Pretty Sexy (with Chef D.Z. Gillespie) ... D-Lo Brown pinned Boo Bradley ... Reckless Youth (with Judd the Stud) pinned junior heavyweight champion Ubas to win the title ... Akita Kaos won a six-man elimination match to win the vacant heavyweight title ... Chef D.Z. Gillespie beat Vinnie Biondo by countout ... Skip pinned Ray Odyssey to win the vacant U.S. heavyweight title. (12-01-95)

—Michael J. DiMuzio

READING—ECW at Bodyslammers Arena: Hack Myers pinned J.T. Smith ... The Pit Bulls beat Dances With Dudley & Bubba Ray Dudley ... Axl Rotten beat Dino Sendoff ... ECW champion Mikey Whipwreck beat Jason ... The Bad Crew beat Georgie Love & The Flamingo Kid ... TV champion 2 Cold Scorpio beat Axl Rotten by disqualification ... Cactus Jack defeated Tommy Dreamer in a match in which the first man to throw a punch would be declared the loser ... Public Enemy beat Stevie Richards & Raven. (11-03-95)

—Michael J. DiMuzio

GLENOLDEN—ECW at the Field House: J.T. Smith pinned Hack Myers ... Axl Rotten defeated Jason ... TV champion 2 Cold Scorpio wrestled 911 to a no contest. Taz was the special guest referee for the match, but the bout was declared a no-contest when Bill Alfonso came to the ring to argue with Taz and was attacked by ECW Commissioner Tod Gordon ... Public Enemy beat Bubba Ray & Dances With Dudley ... ECW champion Mikey Whipwreck pinned The Sandman ... The Pit Bulls & Tommy Dreamer beat Cactus Jack, Raven, & Stevie Richards. (11-04-95)

—Mike DiMuzio & Bart Orkline

ST. MARY'S—Steel City Wrestling at the High School: Benson Lee defeated Masashi Panic ... Frank Stalletto & Lou Marconi beat Stevie Richards & Brian Rollins to win the vacant tag team title ... T. Rantula beat Lou Marconi ... Heavyweight champion Johnny Gunn pinned Raven ... Mikey Whipwreck beat Pablo Marquez to earn a shot at the light heavyweight title ... Mikey Whipwreck beat light heavyweight champion Lord Zoltan ... Virgil wrestled Demolition Ax to a double-countout ... Cactus Jack pinned T. Rantula in a street fight. (11-11-95)

—Jeff Gorman

SOUTH CAROLINA

EASLEY—SCW at Gettys Middle School: J.T. Williams wrestled Brian Stevens to a time-limit

draw ... Stone Cold Kid defeated The Purple Haze ... The Road Hogs beat tag team champions Chip & Dale Stripp in a non-title match ... The Gatekeeper defeated Freedom Fighter ... Jake Mulligan & Madd Maxx Miles defeated Ricky Regal & Mikki Free ... Heavyweight champion J.W. Steele wrestled Cruiser Lewis to a double-countout. (12-09-95)

—Dan Parriss

GREENWOOD—Southern Championship Wrestling at the National Guard Armory: The Destroyer beat Mr. Wrestling ... Cruiser Lewis beat Ricky Storm ... Tag team champions Chip & Dale Stripp wrestled The Road Hogs to a double-countout ... Steve Anderson beat Stone Cold Kid ... Jake Mulligan & Madd Maxx Miles beat Mikki Free & Rikki Regal ... Heavyweight champion J.W. Steele beat Butcher Blackwell. (11-25-95)

—Dan Parriss

TENNESSEE

MEMPHIS—USWA at the Mid-South Coliseum: Miss Texas beat Reggie B. Fine, who disguised himself as a woman and called himself Regina B. Fine during the match ... Moondog Cujo beat Brian Christopher ... The Smoky Mountain Massacre beat Randy Hales ... Southern champion Tex Slazenger beat Koko B. Ware by disqualification ... Bob Armstrong beat Jerry Jarrett by disqualification ... Tag team champions Jesse James Armstrong & Tracey Smothers beat PG-13 by disqualification. (12-04-95)

—Mark Mitchell

MEMPHIS—USWA at the Mid-South Coliseum: Pat Tanaka defeated Steven Dunn ... Tasha Simone & Downtown Bruno defeated Miss Texas in a handicap match ... Moondog Cujo beat Tony Williams ... PG-13 defeated Tracey Smothers & The Smoky Mountain Massacre ... Southern champion Brian Christopher beat Tex Slazenger ... Jerry Lawler defeated Brad Armstrong by disqualification ... Jeff Jarrett defeated Jesse James Armstrong. (11-27-95)

—Mark Mitchell

MEMPHIS—USWA at the Mid-South Coliseum: Steven Dunn defeated Troy (of Tekno Team 2000) ... Pat Tanaka beat Travis (of Tekno Team 2000) ... Moondog Cujo beat Doug Gilbert ... PG-13 beat Jesse James Armstrong & The Smoky Mountain Massacre by disqualification ... Southern champion Brian Christopher defeated Bob Armstrong in a coward-waves-the-flag match ... Ahmed Johnson pinned heavyweight champion Jerry Lawler to win the title. (11-06-95)

—Mark Mitchell

FALL BRANCH—Southern States Wrestling at the Sampson Center: Jeff Lovin wrestled The Juicer to a draw ... The Death Riders beat The Orderlies ... Eddie Golden beat light heavyweight champion The Alabama Heartthrob to win the title ... Johnny Meadows & Eight-Ball Jones beat Danny Christian & David Jericho ... Jimmy Valiant pinned Stan Lee ... Dan Cooley & Beau James beat tag team champions Death & Destruction to win the title. (12-01-95)

—Fay Ferguson

JOHNSON CITY—SMW at Freedom Hall: Flash Flanagan defeated Headbanger Thrasher ... Sgt. Jacqueline Rock defeated The Wolfman ... Tommy Rich defeated heavyweight champion Brad Armstrong to win the title ... Butch Cassidy defeated Jim Cornette by disqualifica-

tion ... Buddy Landell & The Bullet defeated Tommy Rich & The Punisher ... The Heavenly Bodies & Robert Gibson defeated Ricky Morton, Tracey Smothers, & Tony Anthony. (11-25-95)

—Frank Miller

KNOXVILLE—Knoxville Championship Wrestling at the Electric Ballroom: Doug Sluder beat The Intern ... The Delaware Destroyer pinned Eric Rose ... The Master defeated junior heavyweight champion Steve Currio to win the title ... Chic White defeated heavyweight champion David O to win the title ... Tag team champions Dr. Dan & The Orderly beat Jessie Ellis & Bobby B. (11-25-95)

—Tim Farmer

KNOXVILLE—SMW's "Thanksgiving Thunder" at the Civic Coliseum: Flash Flanagan pinned Headbanger Mosh ... Sgt. Jacqueline Rock beat The Wolfman ... Butch Cassidy beat Jim Cornette by disqualification ... Brad Armstrong defeated heavyweight champion Terry Gordy in a country whipping match to win the title ... The Heavenly Bodies & Robert Gibson beat Tony Anthony, Tracey Smothers, & Ricky Morton by disqualification ... Buddy Landell & The Bullet beat Tommy Rich & The Punisher. (11-23-95)

—Bill Needham

MORRISTOWN—SMW at the East High School: Robert Gibson beat Flash Flanagan ... Brad Armstrong beat Terry Gordy in a "loser-gets-10-lashes" match ... Tag team champions The Heavenly Bodies beat Tracey Smothers & Tony Anthony in an elimination match ... Buddy Landell beat Tommy Rich. (11-11-95)

—Frank Miller

ALCOA—All-State Wrestling at the Green Acres Flea Market: Rick Justice & Chuck Colt defeated Russell Thompson & The Carolina Kid ... Shuto & Jeff Anderson beat Bobby B and The U.S. Shogun ... Keith Hart beat Eliminator ... Lynn Montana & The Black Assassin beat Greg Hart & David Jericho ... Tony Prichard & Lone Star defeated Shogun & E.F. Hutton by reverse decision ... Eric Rose & Jessie Ellis defeated Dr. Dan & Billy Orderly in a loser-leaves-town match when Ellis pinned Dr. Dan. According to a prematch stipulation, Dr. Dan must now leave the area. (11-02-95)

—Bill Needham

TEXAS

LUFKIN—WCWF at the Civic Center: Jose Lothario beat The Texas Assassin ... Dynamite Dixon beat Manu ... The American Power Ranger over G.Q. Knight ... Bullman Downs beat The Evil Clown ... Mark Von Erich beat Butcher Brother. (11-25-95)

—Brett Wolfe

DALLAS—CWA at the Sportatorium: Al Jackson beat Harkryder ... Devon Michaels beat Jimmy James ... Sam Houston beat Randy Rhodes ... Killer Brooks & Greg Valentine beat Guido Falcone & Vito Mussolini ... Hector Guerrero beat Treach Phillips ... Johnny Mantel & Bill Irwin beat Firebreaker Chip & Bull Pain. (11-10-95)

—Jenny Powell

VIRGINIA

NORFOLK—WCW World War III pay-per-view at the Scope: TV champion Johnny B. Badd pinned "Diamond" Dallas Page at 12:35 ...

Big Bubba Rogers knocked out **Hacksaw Duggan** at 10:05 in a taped-fist match ... **Bull Nakano** & **Akira Hokuto** defeated **Cutie Suzuki** & **Mayumi Ozaki** when Nakano pinned Ozaki at 9:16 ... U.S. champion **Kensuke Sasaki** pinned **Chris Benoit** at 10:01 ... **Lex Luger** defeated **Randy Savage** by submission at 5:28 ... **Sting** defeated **Ric Flair** by submission at 14:30 ... **Randy Savage** won a three-ring, 60-man battle royal to capture the held-up WCW World title at 29:19.
(11-26-95)

—Scott Reese

BASSETT—AIWF at Bassett High School: **Superstar** beat **Skull Von Shultz** by disqualification ... **Dynamite Doug** & **Leroy McCoy** beat **Johnny Reb** & **Jumpin' Jimmy** ... Lightweight champion **Brian Danzig** beat **King Cobra** ... **Rick Deeziel** beat **Chris Windham** in a falls-count-anywhere match ... **Jackie Anderson** beat **Sebastian Kane** by disqualification ... **Johnny Reb** won a battle royal.
(11-11-95)

—Dean Puckett

WEST VIRGINIA

PRINCETON—Southern States Wrestling at the High School: **Tim Blaze** pinned **Eclipse** ... **The Juicer** pinned **Danny Christian** ... **Bobby Blaze** defeated **The Stormtrooper** ... **Super Mario** pinned **The Equalizer** ... **Death & Destruction** beat tag team champions **Beau James** & **Danny Cooley** to win the title ... **War Machine** defeated **Jimmy Valiant**.
(12-02-95)

—Fay Ferguson

WHEELING—WWF at the Civic Center: **Hunter Hearst Helmsley** won a battle royal ... **Hakushi** defeated **Bob Holly** ... **Ahmed Johnson** beat **Skip** ... **Goldust** beat **Marty Jannetty** ... **Sid Vicious** beat **Rad Radford** ... **Owen Hart** beat **Barry Horowitz** ... **The Kid** beat **Intercontinental champion Razor Ramon** by countout ... **Davey Boy Smith** beat **Diesel** by disqualification ... **The Undertaker** (with **Paul Bearer**) beat **Yokozuna** ... World tag team champions **The Smokin' Gunns** beat **Kama** & **Isaac Yankem** ... World champion **Bret Hart** beat **Hunter Hearst Helmsley**.
(11-28-95)

—Frank Nelson

WISCONSIN

MILWAUKEE—Windy City Wrestling at Serb Hall: **Jake Millman** pinned **The Master Technician** ... Lightweight champion **Brandon Bishop** beat **Steve Boz** by disqualification ... **Mike Anthony** pinned **Blue Angel** ... **Haystacks Ross** & **Chad Lewis** beat **Psycho** & **Ripper Manson** ... **Christopher Daniels** wrestled **Brett Sanders** to a double-countout ... **The Steele Brothers** beat tag team champions **The Texas Hangmen** by disqualification ... Heavyweight champion **Mike Samson** beat league champion **Turbo** ... **Colt Steele** won a battle royal.
(11-12-95)

—Steve Cain

INTERNATIONAL

CANADA

OSHAWA, ONTARIO, Wednesday, December 5: WWF at the Civic Auditorium: **Fatu**, **Hakushi**, & **Barry Horowitz** beat **Kama**, **Skip**, & **Isaac Yankem** ... **Goldust** beat **Bob Holly** ... **The Kid** pinned **Marty Jannetty** ... **Savio Vega** beat **Bob Backlund** ... **Ahmed Johnson** beat **Rad Radford** ... **Sid Vicious** beat **Intercontinental**

champion Razor Ramon by countout ... **Hunter Hearst Helmsley** beat **Henry Godwinn** ... World tag team champions **The Smokin' Gunns** beat **Owen Hart** & **Yokozuna** ... **Davey Boy Smith** beat **Diesel** by disqualification ... World champion **Bret Hart** beat **The Undertaker** by disqualification.
(12-05-95)

—Steve Argintaru

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA—River City Wrestling at Chalmers Community Center: **Steve Stryker** defeated **Tulip** ... **Robby Royce** beat **Red Dragon** ... **Bobby Collins** beat **Caveman Broda** ... **The Reservoir Dogs** defeated **Bobby Jay** & **Black Dragon** ... Heavyweight champion **Brian Jewel** wrestled **E.Z. Ryder** to a double-countout.
(11-23-95)

—Bryan Gilbert

JAPAN

TOKYO—New Japan/WCW at Tokyo Sumo Hall: **Tokimitsu Ishizawa**, **Yuji Nagata**, & **Jushin Liger** defeated **Shinichiro Otani**, **Koji Kanemoto**, & **El Samurai** ... **Junji Hirata** beat **Booker T** ... **Hiro Saito** & **Masa Chono** beat **Johnny B. Badd** & **Bobby Eaton** ... **Masa Saito** & **Riki Choshu** beat **The Nasty Boys** ... **Shinya Hashimoto** & **Tadao Yasuda** beat **Arn Anderson** & **The Giant** ... **Ric Flair** beat **Osamu Nishimura** ... **Hiro Yoshi Tenzan** pinned **Kurasawa** ... **The Great Muta** pinned **Lord Steven Regal** ... **Kensuke Sasaki** pinned WCW U.S. champion **Sting** to win the title.
(11-13-95)

—Koichi Yoshizawa

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY FEBRUARY

LOUISIANA

SHREVEPORT—NWA at the Municipal Auditorium: North American Champion "Cowboy" **Bill Watts** defeated **Waldo Von Erich** by disqualification ... U.S. tag team champions **Gorgeous George II** & **Greg Valentine** defeated **Jerry Brown** & **Buddy Roberts** by disqualification ... **Killer Karl Kox** pinned **Dick Murdoch** in a no-disqualification match ... **Calypso Joe** beat **Sonny Rogers** ... **Ted DiBiase** wrestled **Jack Curtis** to a draw.
(02-03-76)

—PWI archives

MASSACHUSETTS

BOSTON—WWWF at the Hynes Auditorium: **Chief Jay Strongbow** wrestled **Prof. Toru Tanaka** to a draw ... **Rene Goulet** & **Mike Conrad** beat **Stan Stasiak** & **Jim Valiant** in a best-of-three-falls match ... **Victor Rivera** defeated **Russian II** ... **Sonny King** defeated **Russian I** ... **Manuel Soto** defeated **Bull Pometti** ... World champion **Pedro Morales** wrestled **King Curtis** to a no-contest. The match was stopped after both wrestlers attacked the referee.
(02-19-72)

—PWI archives

TEXAS

DALLAS—World Class Championship Wrestling at the Sportatorium: **Solomon Grundy** defeated **Brian Adias** ... **Eric Embry** defeated **Jeff Raitz** ... **Terry Gordy** & **Buddy Roberts** wrestled **Kerry** & **Kevin Von Erich** to a no-contest ... Heavyweight champion **Al Perez** wrestled **Terry Taylor** to a no-contest.
(02-12-88)

—Mark Weintz



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between falls

(Continued from page 5)



Bob Backlund defended the WWF World title honorably against Jimmy Snuka and many others during his first reign. Reader Stan Lenkiewicz prefers to remember Backlund this way, not as the raving lunatic he is today.

of the greatest wrestling families? So what if he was the first to hold the ECW TV belt and one-half of the ECW tag team title at the same time? So what if his series of matches against Eddy Guerrero was the best this sport has seen since Ric Flair vs. Rick Steamboat?! So what!

There's no question that Jerry Lawler would destroy Dean Malenko ... in a rank-out contest. In the ring, it would be a far different story. Just as Gordon Solie is the dean of broadcasting, Mr. Malenko is the dean in the

ring. And everybody wonders why so many wrestlers ply their trade in Japan. Because that's where they get the respect they so rightly deserve. Even if they're "bland."

HARRY SIMON
Las Vegas, NV

[Editor's note: Indeed, being bland does not detract from a wrestler's physical abilities, but it could certainly have a huge effect on a wrestler's ability to get important matches. That's the reality of professional wrestling. And in Malenko's case, that's a weakness.]

PEERING INTO THE PAST

I am extremely disappointed and dismayed by the criticism that has been leveled against former WWF World champion Bob Backlund lately. Many fans and wrestling analysts have forgotten the many accomplishments of Mr. Backlund. Backlund once ruled the WWF for nearly six years, before Vince McMahon Jr. transformed the WWF into a circus. When this happened, everything Backlund worked so hard for was suddenly gone.

Granted, Backlund's recent antics

Ric Flair and Brian Pillman would like you to believe that the latest version of The Four Horsemen is as good as any other version. Reader Bruce Gray would disagree.

may have been a ploy to get some attention. In everyone's life come some difficult decisions. However, Backlund's frustration may be a result of his being overlooked and neglected for so long. No matter what Backlund does, this reader will always remember the Bob Backlund who courageously defended his World title against stars like Killer Khan, Jimmy Snuka, and Stan Hansen.

STAN LENKIEWICZ
Paramus, NJ



HORSEMEN'S LAST RIDE

Once again we have another incarnation of The Four Horsemen. Personally, I am tired of them. This latest combination may look good on paper, but I believe this is an alliance of convenience and desperation. If you look at the people involved, you'll see why.

Arn Anderson isn't happy unless he's a part of a group of some kind.

Brian Pillman has been in a serious slump since The Hollywood Blonds broke up in '93. Ric Flair, despite everything he accomplished in his heyday, is in the midst of an irreversible career downslide. Chris Benoit is just trying to take the easy way to the top

by joining the Horsemen.

How long will this latest combination last? Who can really say? But I am willing to say it will be short-lived.

BRUCE GRAY
Orlando, FL □

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(Continued from page 7)

WWF tag team champions **The Smokin' Gunns** (see story on page 39). Their reaction was, well, predictable.

"Apter," Rock spat, "it's amazing that you've been around this sport so long and still ask such stupid questions!"

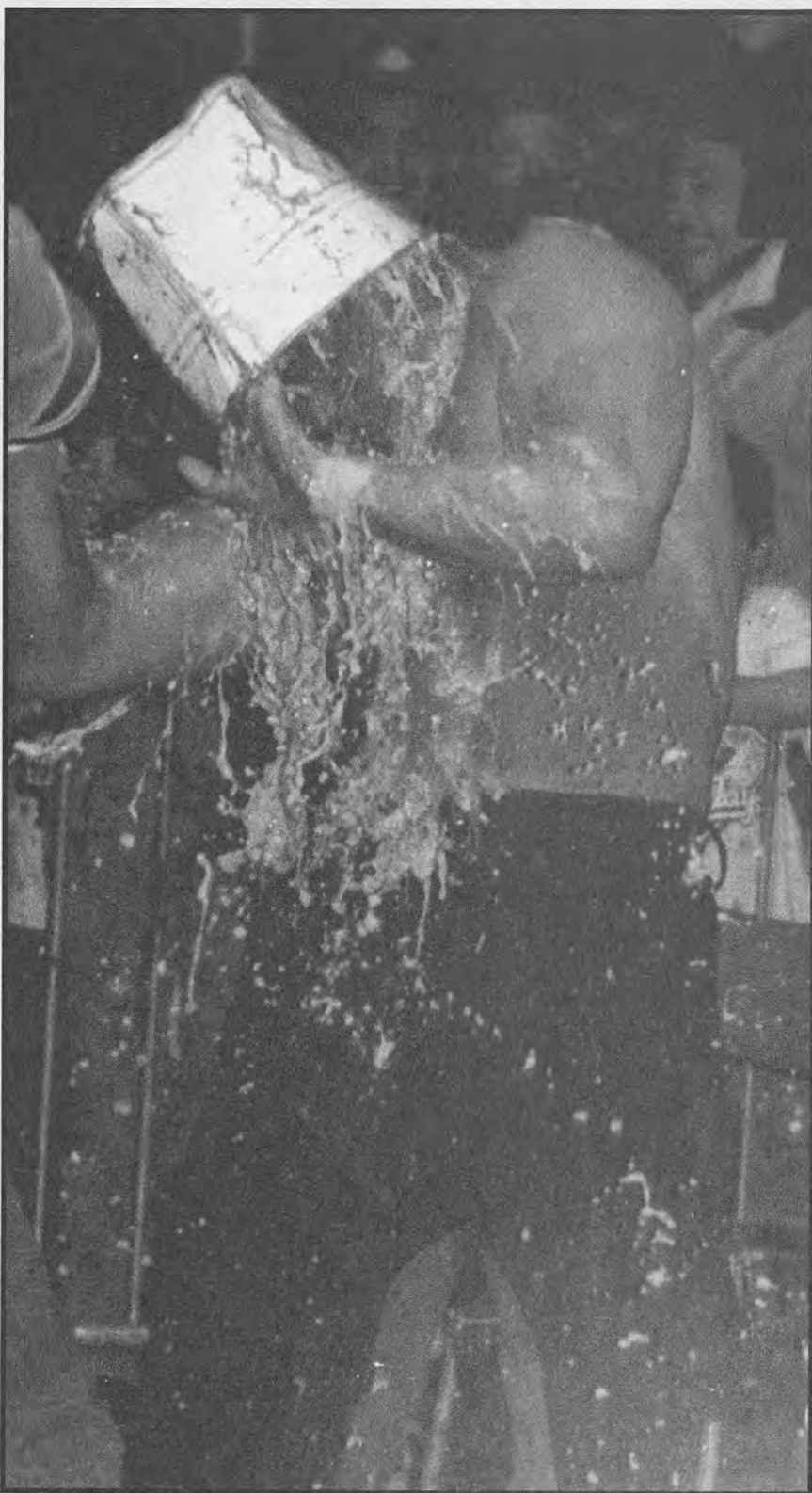
I guess that means no.

Ricky Morton and **Robert Gibson**, better known as **The Rock 'n' Roll Express**, have patched up their differences and are appearing together in independent federations all over the South. Also, Morton and **Beau James** won the Southern States Wrestling tag team belts in December, beating **Death and Destruction** ... AAA's **Chicano Power** is now wrestling without a mask after losing a mask vs. mask to **Tinieblas Jr.**

Even though **The Undertaker** did not win the WWF World title in his series of matches against Bret Hart, manager **Paul Bearer** believes his man is still capable of winning the belt. "**Diesel, Davey Boy Smith, Owen Hart, Yokozuna**—they all interfered when my Undertaker was on the road to glory against 'The Hitman,'" Bearer told reporters at a recent press conference. "It is no fault of his own that he is not wearing the gold belt."

"Yeah, it's unfortunate that people ran in and destroyed an excellent competitive match," Hart said. "Undertaker and I pushed ourselves to the limits, and either one of us could have won had there been no interference."

Star Ryder is the new Pro Wrestling Federation junior heavy-weight champion after beating **Masked Maniac** on December 5 in



Hunter Hearst Helmsley is a man of refined tastes, so it shouldn't come as a surprise that he hasn't enjoyed having Henry Godwinn dump his bucket of slop over his head after some of their matches.

Charlotte, North Carolina ... Former WWF World champion **The Iron Sheik**, a 22-year veteran, has signed for several matches in the PWF ... **Lanny Poffo**, the brother of WCW World champion **Randy Savage**, is negotiating with WCW.

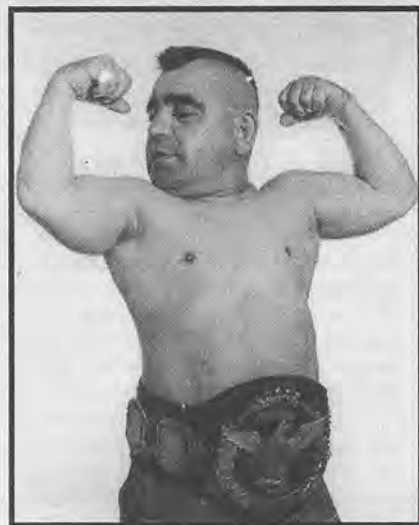
Hunter Hearst Helmsley told reporters he is "completely disgusted that the World Wrestling Federation persists in allowing that **Henry Godwinn** fellow to dump buckets of hog slop upon my beautiful body." Someone should remind that Helmsley fellow that when he signed for a series of "slop" matches against Godwinn, he had to know he was likely to get slop thrown on him at some point!

Capt. Lou Albano has been managing former Headshrinker **Fatu** on several independent cards up and down the East Coast ... Give **Savannah Slim** some credit. He tried to be brave and defend the IWA tag team title by himself when his partner, **Hollywood Hubie**, didn't show up for a scheduled title defense in Springfield, Ohio. Their scheduled opponents, **Kenny "Hurricane" Hendrix** and **The Wrecker**, showed Slim no sympathy. They destroyed him and are now wearing the belts ... Mexican WWA champion **Rey Misterio Jr.** is still feuding with **Psicosis** and **Juventud Guerrera** in Mexico.

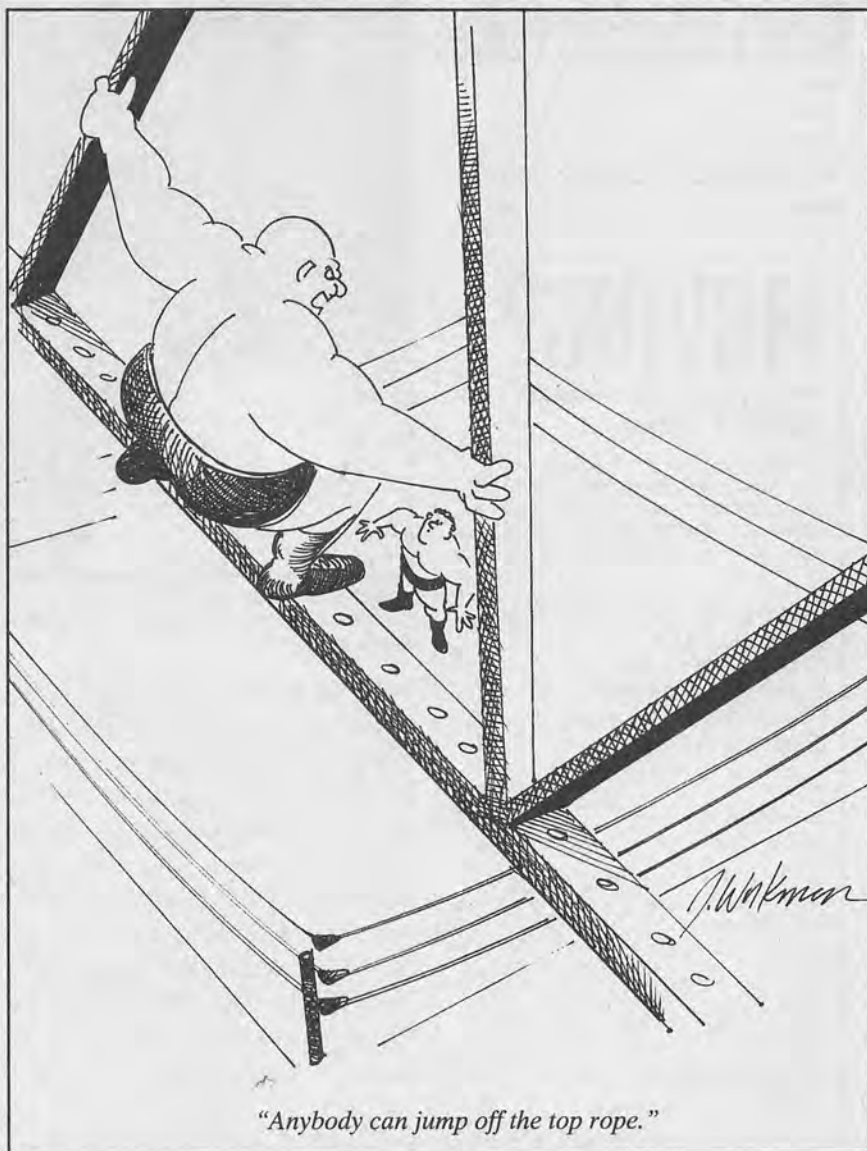
Remember **Dark Journey**? She was a manager/wrestler in the old UWF back in the mid-1980s. She had been retired from wrestling for a few years, but she came back to help her old friends **Chris Adams** and **Action Jackson** at a Confederate Wrestling Association card in Texas. She was in their corner when they faced **Bull Pain** and **Firebreaker Chip**, who had **Gen. Skandor Akbar** in their corner. As you might have guessed, Akbar didn't do much interfering with Journey around.

When I first became a wrestling

fan many, many years ago, I used to love to watch midget matches, so you can imagine how I felt when I learned of the death of the great midget star **Little Beaver**. Beaver, whose real name was **Lionel Giroux**, died in St. Jerome, Quebec, on December 4 after a long battle with emphysema. I remember him telling reporters years ago that his greatest moment in the ring was when he faced **King Kong Bundy**, who weighs 446 pounds, in a tag team match at **WrestleMania III**. I also fondly remember his classic bouts against **Sky Low Low**. They were great. Little Beaver, who was 61, is survived by his son, **Lionel Jr.** □



Little Beaver, one of the all-time great midget wrestlers, died in December at the age of 61. Beaver, who wrestled professionally for nearly 40 years, was voted Midget of the Year in 1973.



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from the desk of...

(Continued from page 8)



Johnny B. Badd vaults over the top rope in a match against New Japan's Masa Chono in Japan in November. One day soon, New Japan could be promoting its own cards in the U.S.

WWF all these years, conceivably Levin and the rest of the Time Warner Board of Directors might not be. Is WCW turning a profit? It seems like they should be. But who knows? How many major league baseball teams that we had assumed were making money were crying poverty during last year's baseball strike? If Time Warner turns thumbs down to WCW, you can be sure that it's not because the Board of Directors is appalled by the sight of men throwing one another around a wrestling ring.

The WWF, meanwhile, is in full control of its own destiny. McMahon, beholden to no stockholders, can run his operation the way he sees fit — and for as long as he sees fit.

By 2000, Eric Bischoff will be the blow-by-blow man for WrestleMania.

•**WCW wipes out the WWF; Time Warner wipes out WCW; ECW and USWA become the Big Two.** Either of the first two statements is well within the realm of feasibility, though probably not both. But if the impossible does happen, there

has to be somebody to run wrestling promotions in the United States ... unless ...

•New Japan, All-Japan, and AAA begin to promote wrestling full-time in America. More and more people are starting to catch on to what is going on in Japan and Mexico, where wrestling is bigger now than it was in the U.S. during its height in the 1980s. More and more wrestlers from Japan and Mexico are making their marks in the States. Starrcade featured a series of matches pitting the top wrestlers of WCW against the top wrestlers of New Japan. Several of Mexico's AAA wrestlers are making a huge impression in ECW. It is only a matter of time before a Japanese wrestling program is televised on a regular basis here.

The financial power of New Japan and All-Japan in particular is enormous. Might New Japan and All-Japan one day buy out WCW and the WWF like Sony bought Columbia pictures and Nintendo bought a large stake in the Seattle Mariners?

Might one day New Japan's Joshinori Tsuji and All-Japan's Akira Fukuzawa be the respective blow-by-blow men for Starrcade and WrestleMania?

Write me and let me know what you think. And when you do, please consider ...

The editors of PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED receive a great deal of mail from readers. I want to assure all of you who have written to us that each and every letter has been read by the editor to whom it was addressed. Often, however, we are unable to answer the letters personally for a variety of reasons.

With that in mind, I would like to present you with a set of guidelines concerning mail:

1) If you would like a response to your letter, you must include a self-

addressed stamped envelope.

2) If your intention is to reach a particular wrestler, your best bet is to send your letter in care of the federation in which he or she wrestles. If you send a letter here, we will do our best to forward it, but we cannot guarantee that you'll get a response.

3) If you would like your letter to be published in the letters section, please address it as such and keep it short and to the point.

4) If you are seeking information on how to become a wrestler, there isn't all that much we can tell you. Each wrestler has his or her own story of how he got where he is; there isn't a tried-and-true procedure.

5) If you are seeking a recommendation on a wrestling school, we are very reluctant to do so. We cannot verify the validity of every school out there, and we certainly don't want to suggest one without having first-hand knowledge of a school's quality. There are certain schools that are referred to from time to time in various wrestlers' profiles. Based on their track record, those are probably the best bets.

6) One of the questions most frequently asked of me is how to become a wrestling journalist. The answer varies, depending on your level of education. In general, however, I recommend that you get as much experience as you can writing for your local or school newspaper. Do not limit yourself to writing about wrestling or sports in general! To be a good journalist, you must know how to write a good feature story as well as a good news story. It is also important that you read a lot. And not just wrestling magazines! Expose yourself to a variety of styles and you will become a better, more versatile writer. Most importantly, if you are considering a career in journalism, do not limit yourself to wrestling. Realistically, how many positions are available to wrestling writers? ☐

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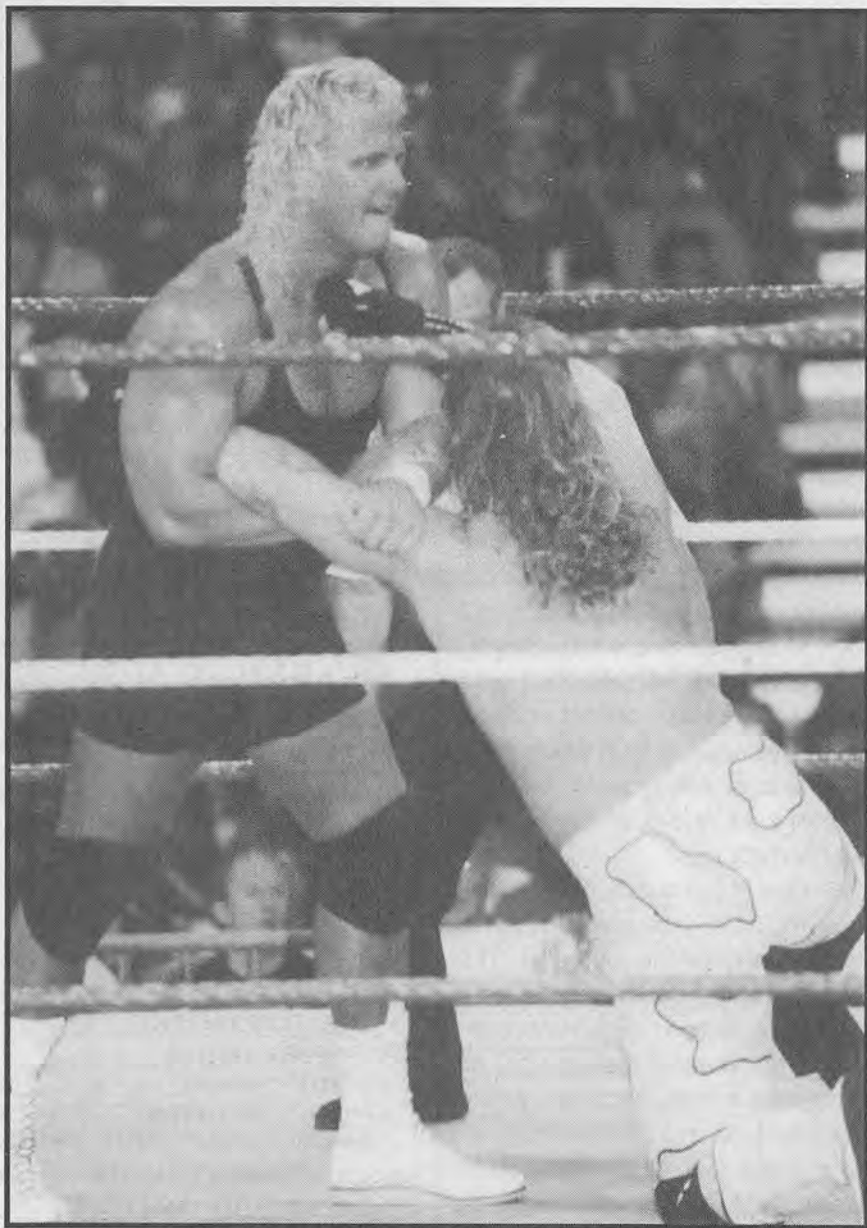
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win, lose, or draw

(Continued from page 12)



Hennig had a great series of matches with Shawn Michaels in the summer of 1993. That's one rivalry that could be renewed if Hennig's back heals. The WWF could use a superstar like him about now.

the Hennig-Luger feud, and while they've lost some respect for Luger, they saw the spirit Hennig brought to those encounters, and they aren't eager to face it.

Hennig didn't always create that sort of terror. In his early days, he was a nice, harmless guy who had the skill to be a champion, but not the heart and

guts. Then he turned against his old friend Greg Gagne and won the AWA World title. Sadly, his mood had darkened, but he had a sharper focus and a greater willingness to push himself to be the best.

He's still pushing himself. Not too hard though. He doesn't want to jeopardize his opportunity to grab

another world title. He's a lot like the NHL's Mario Lemieux. He's too smart and too proud to return before he's fully healed.

"Perfect" is also smart enough to realize the shots against Hart may not come as quickly as he wants. So he's preparing for an Intercontinental belt showdown with Ramon, provided Razor continues to hold the belt. Michaels, if he can come back from postconcussion syndrome, could have something to say about that.

Shawn is, like Hennig, the complete wrestler. Hennig would rather test himself against a complete wrestler than someone like Diesel, who, though he has improved dramatically, is not yet in Hennig, Hart, or Michaels' class. Hennig has held the I-C belt twice before. He knows it's more than a consolation prize. He wants to take that important piece of gold into his encounter with Hart and give the World champion even more to fear.

That contest may not happen for a while. It may never happen. With one mistimed "Perfectplex," Hennig could mess up his back again and spend another year out of action, or even end his career.

In WWF locker rooms, however, they're talking as though Hennig already is back in competition. They're convinced his stay in the broadcast booth will be a short one. They know how ready he is to start. "Mr. Perfect" never has been perfect, but for his many foes over the years, he has been close enough. Friends and enemies agree: He has been one of the great competitors of the past decade.

To the booth, Hennig brings rule-breaker bias. To the ring, he brings old-fashioned wrestling excellence. Let's hope his back allows him to bring us the better choice. □

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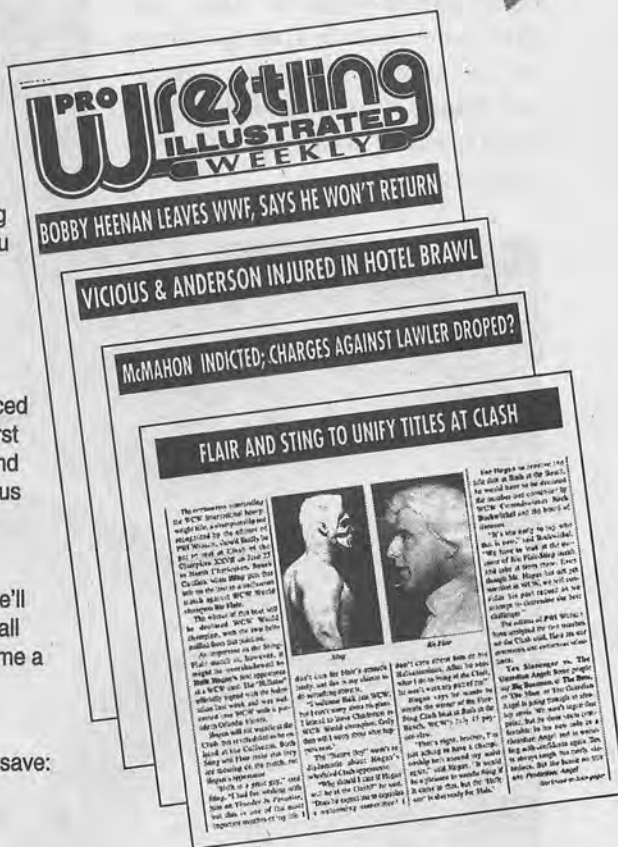
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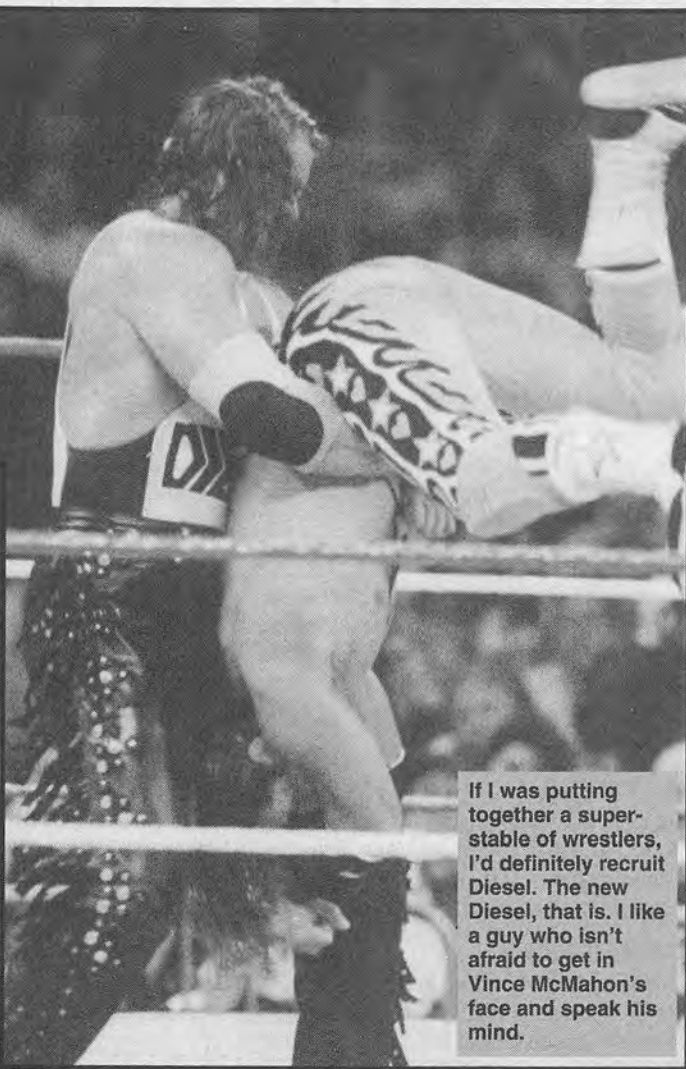
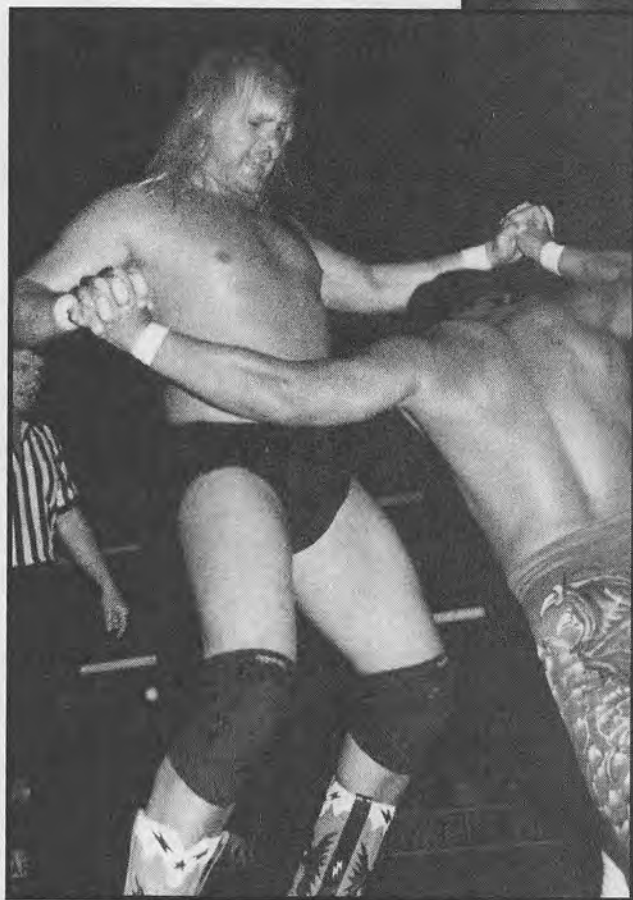
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off the top rope

(Continued from page 16)

passed talents like Diesel. Someone on the downhill of a career, like Terry Gordy, a man still capable of pulling an upset but no longer hypnotized by title belts. You want interchangeable parts, in case of injury and emergencies. Add a sea-side homestead in Hawaii, where you can take them to train, a generous bonus system to keep them happy, and a lot of praying that they all get along.



If I was putting together a super-stable of wrestlers, I'd definitely recruit Diesel. The new Diesel, that is. I like a guy who isn't afraid to get in Vince McMahon's face and speak his mind.

Let me see ... Barry Windham hasn't wrestled in about 18 or 19 months and a fan wants to know if he's retired. No, of course not. What in the world would give anyone that idea?

one can never be certain when they are trying to be funny. Mr. Frazier here thinks he is funny; certainly the photo on his business card is funny-looking. Be informed, sir, sending trash through the mail, which one of your letters constitutes, is a felony offense.

Dear Eddie,

I have a solution that will end the feuding between WCW and the WWF, unite the two federations under one banner, and make best friends of Vince and Ted. I propose a match between Dick the Bruiser and Dusty Rhodes, with Doink the Clown as referee to ensure an even

larger turnout. I do not expect any form of compensation for this idea. It is my contribution to the sport I love.

JEFFREY M. FRAZIER
Carmel, IN

Dear Jeffrey,

The exciting thing about correspondence with wrestling fans is

Dear Eddie,

Has Barry Windham retired?

TAMMY FUESTON
Grand Junction, CO

Dear Tammy,

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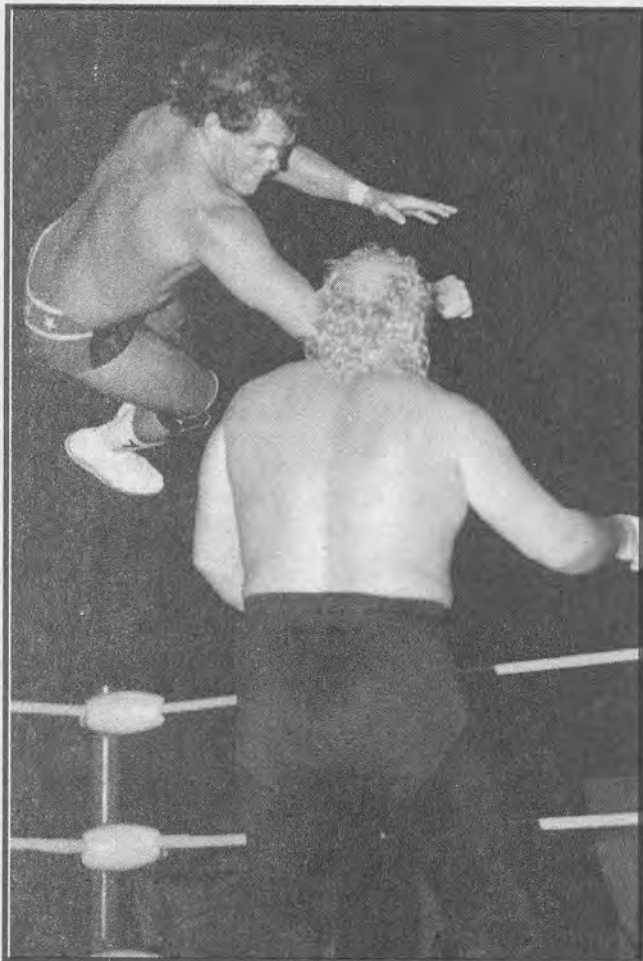
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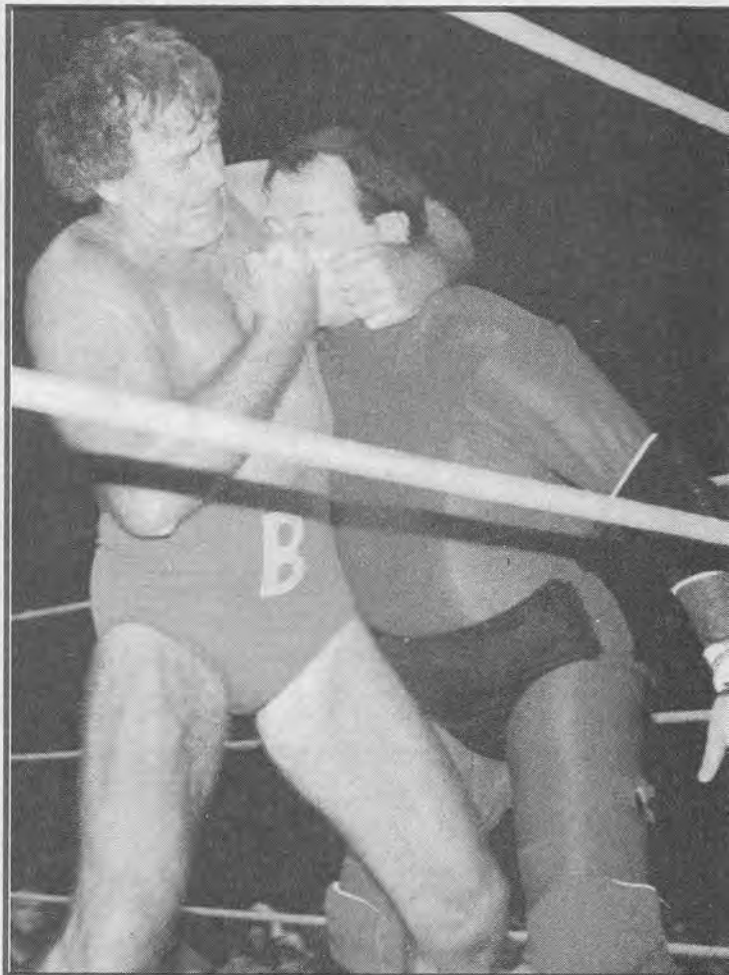
press conference

(Continued from page 23)



Tracey Smothers vs. Tony Anthony was one of the best SMW feuds ever. It was violent, it was intense, it was exciting. At the time of this feud, Tennessee native Anthony was claiming to be a Northerner!

For most of their time together in SMW, Armstrong and Cornette were arch-enemies. Still, looking back, "Bullet" Bob is in some ways glad Cornette was a big part of Smoky Mountain.



that's okay. They made their choice. There are benefits and consequences to their choice. That's become obvious. It's different. The road was more difficult for SMW and will continue to be more difficult for the USWA. Let's face it: Independent attendance is down, and we have less of a TV presence than ever before. The WWF and WCW are dominating.

LENKER: Will the USWA survive?

ARMSTRONG: I certainly hope so. They've been a part of Tennessee wrestling for a long time.

ROSENBAUM: I'm surprised to hear you say that, considering the state of affairs between SMW and

the USWA.

ARMSTRONG: Don't be surprised. Sure, we had our differences, but we never wanted to put each other out of business. I'm still in a war with the Jarretts and some of those other guys in the USWA. As it turned out—and this surprises me—we actually ended up helping each other. People loved to watch our wars. I'm sure there will be some people in Memphis gloating over SMW's demise, but I betcha none of those people are wrestlers or people associated with wrestling.

APTER: So what's next? Where do you and the other SMW people

go from here?

ARMSTRONG: Hey, Bill, we've known each other a long time. I was around well before SMW came along! Life goes on. We had great talent in this federation: Tommy Rich, my sons, Terry Gordy, Buddy Landell, Gibson and Morton, Tracey Smothers, Tony Anthony. Take Anthony, for instance. What a colorful guy! Do you really think there aren't federations out there just dying to have him? And how about Buddy? He and The Headbangers are trying to work out a deal with the WWF.

LENKER: And yourself?

ARMSTRONG: Hey, old wres-



The Heavenly Bodies-Rock 'n' Roll Express feud was born in Smoky and made for some thrilling matches. At the time of SMW's demise, however, Rick Morton and Tom Prichard were allies.

the Smoky Mountain title, The Rock 'n' Roll Express wrestling, those were all wonderful times. Even down to the very end, with The Heavenly Bodies and Robert Gibson on one side and Ricky Morton, Tracey Smothers, and Tony Anthony on

the other, that was great stuff. The kind of thing that if you put it on one of those Monday night pro-

grams, everybody's talking about it around the water cooler on Tuesday morning. The only thing I feel bad about is that Brad wasn't champion when the federation folded. That would've been wonderful and so appropriate, Brad as the last SMW heavyweight champion. This family has put so much into the federation. Smoky Mountain was just a good old-fashioned, old-time promotion. Not a lot of glitz or fancy productions, but just a lot of good, solid, intense wrestling that fans could really get into and appreciate. I'll miss it.

APTER: Is this the toughest time of your career, Bob?

ARMSTRONG: Bill, it's right up there, but what can I say? How can I compare this to when I heard the news that Eddie Gilbert died? What's our basis for comparison? Sure, it's difficult, I feel horrible, but life goes on. Life goes on. It always does. □

tlers don't fade away or die. Whether it's in actual wrestling or management, there'll be something for me to do. Let me put it this way: I'm not up nights worrying about it.

APTER: But you must think about it.

ARMSTRONG: Sure, I think about the good times, and there have been plenty of them. Heck, you're not going to believe this, but I've even had some good thoughts about Jim Cornette lately.

ROSENBAUM: Well, you should. He put some spark in the federation for a long time. He says he made the federation.

ARMSTRONG: He created controversy. Almost cost me my career, too, but there was controversy. When he talks, people listen. Maybe they can't figure out what he's saying, but they listen. And remember that thing when Tony Anthony was telling people he was a Northerner? Well, that got under a lot of people's skin, and I'm not even sure to this day what Anthony was thinking about, but he got people's attention. And, of course, my son Brad winning



"Go ahead, take it. You need it more than I do."

ahmed johnson

(Continued from page 21)

Owen Hart could tell you how effective Ahmed's modified power bomb is. One knock against him is that he lacks technical skills. That didn't seem to hurt him against the lighter, quicker Owen.

"That proves nothing ... absolutely nothing," declared a stunned Jim Cornette, Yokozuna's manager. "Look at the tape. It's more of a hip-toss than a body-

slam. Besides, you don't earn a shot at the WWF World title without first gaining more experience and wins against the best wrestlers *here*. There are a lot of guys who should get shots before him. Yoko, Owen Hart, and Davey Boy Smith come to mind immediately."

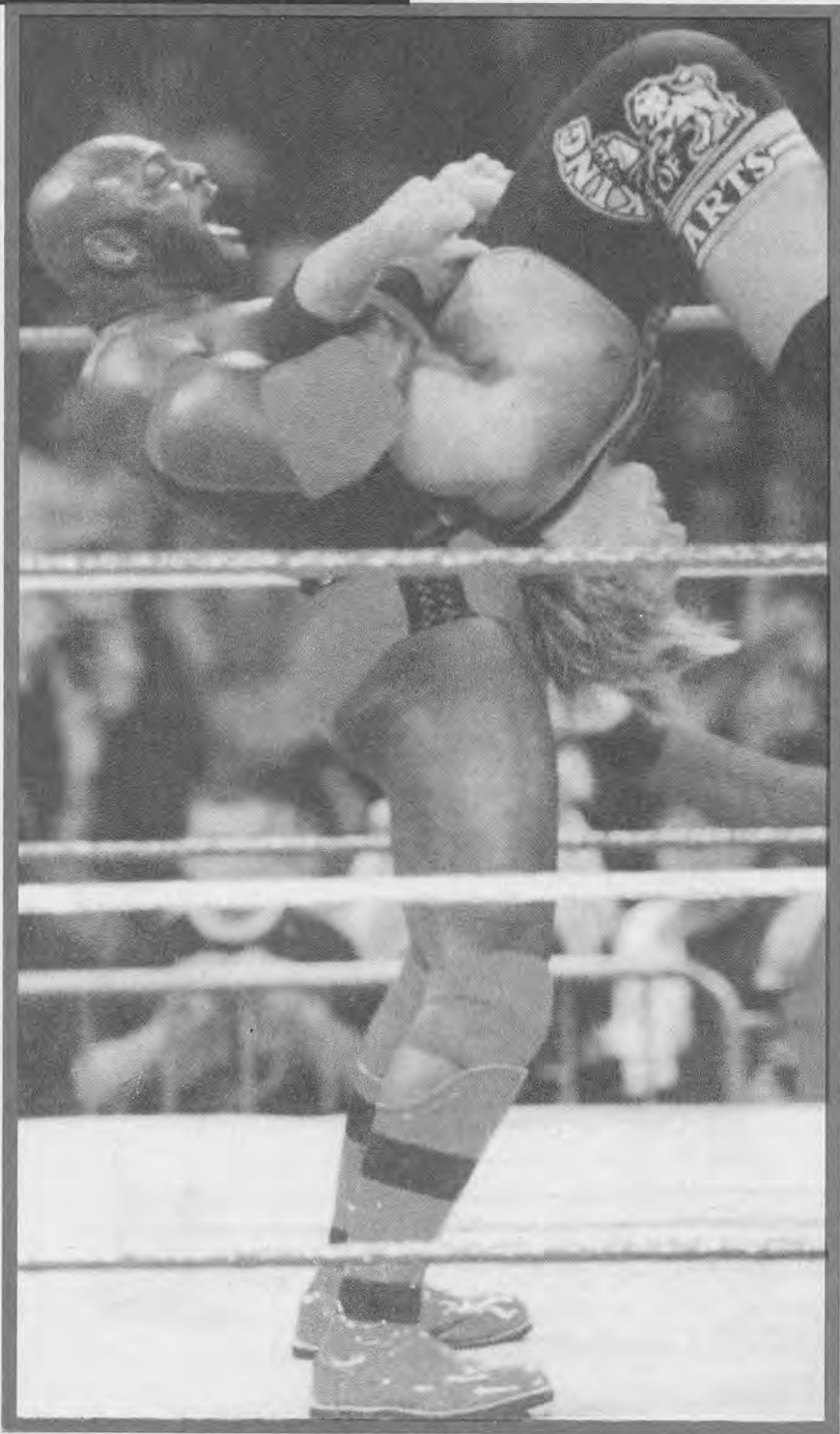
Despite a penchant for hyperbole, Cornette may be on the mark on this one. Although Johnson is undefeated in the WWF, he has yet to prove himself one-on-one against a top-of-the-line wrestler. Most of his victories have come against mid-level wrestlers such as Rad Radford.

"What else do you expect from me?" asked Johnson. "Do you think Diesel or Sid or Mabel or Razor Ramon is going to step in the ring against me? I'd dismantle them all. With one devastating powerslam, I could squeeze all the air out of their lungs."

Such matchups would not only serve Johnson well, they would add a spark to the WWF. Fans have received Johnson enthusiastically, for he wrestles cleanly, is polite in and out of the ring, and comes off as intelligent.

"He has all the gifts of a potential champion," said Brian Christopher, who has seen him in the USWA. "He is not patient, which is a good sign, actually. And he's the kind of athlete who plays well to an audience; he feeds off fans' cheers. That's why this whole USWA situation bothers him so much. He just wants to be able to walk into a WWF ring and have a fan shout, 'Hey, it's Ahmed Johnson, champion.'"

Right now, however, Johnson remains not only a champion in search of title shots in the WWF, but also as a man in search of respect. □



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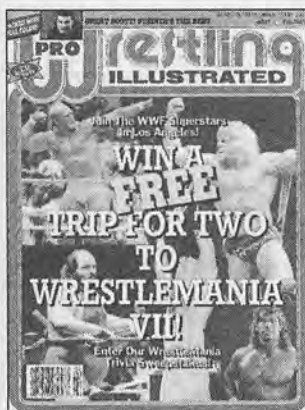
February 1988/CENTERFOLD: Ronnie Garvin. **Savage & Elizabeth**, Garvin, Von Erichs, Freebirds.

April 1989/CENTERFOLD: Rick Steiner. **Randy Savage**, Ted Turner, Richter, Paul E., Powers of Pain.

December 1990/CENTERFOLD: Sting. **New WWF Blood**, Four Horsemen, Kerry, Doom, Gilbert, Slaughter.

January 1991/CENTERFOLD: Kerry Von Erich. **WWF vs. NWA**, Hogan, Hansen, Sting, Sherri & Warrior.

February 1991/CENTERFOLD: 1991 calendar. **WrestleMania**, Vicious, DiBiase-Rhodes, Steiner, Power & Glory.



May 1991/CENTERFOLD: Arn Anderson. **Hulk Hogan**, Rude, Flair-Sting, Thesz.

June 1991/CENTERFOLD: Hacksaw Duggan. **Hulk Hogan**, Cactus, Flair, Nasty Boys, Steiner.

January 1993/CENTERFOLD: Jeff Jarrett. **Flair/Summerslam**, Simmons by Bowden, Von Erich interview.

February 1993/CENTERFOLD: Curt Hennig. **Ramon**, Snuka-Muraco, Rude, Rhodes, Roberts interview.

April 1993/CENTERFOLD: Barry Windham. **Steiners**, Backlund, Sting-Muta, Hawk-Sasaki.

November 1993/CENTERFOLD: The Steiners. **WCW Midyear Report**, Doink, Funk-Gilbert, Race, Yokozuna.

January 1994/CENTERFOLD: Jerry Lawler. **Doink**, Nasty Boys, Steiners, Cornette, Vicious.

May 1994/CENTERFOLD: Tatanka. **Yokozuna-Luger**, Flair-Vader, Heenan, **WrestleMania** retrospective.

July 1994/CENTERFOLD: Rick Steamboat. **Razor Ramon**, Flair-Regal, Cactus, Lawler, Yokozuna workout.

August 1994/CENTERFOLD: Doink & Dink. **Bret Hart/WrestleMania X**, Steiners, Albano, steroid trial.

November 1994/CENTERFOLD: Randy Savage. **Hogan In WCW**, Cactus, Yokozuna, Lawler, Michaels, Jake.

Winter 1994/CENTERFOLD: Terry Funk. **Hulkamania Wild Again**, McMahon, Vicious, AAA, Flair.

January 1995/CENTERFOLD: Razor Ramon. **Tatanka**, Hogan, Alundra, ECW vs. NWA, Brian Lee.

February 1995/CENTERFOLD: Johnny B. Badd. **WCW Civil War**, Pillman & Austin, Abdullah, Bret Hart.

April 1995/CENTERFOLD: Sabu. **WWF Title Turmoil**, Hogan, Cornette, Diesel, Alundra, Rhodes.

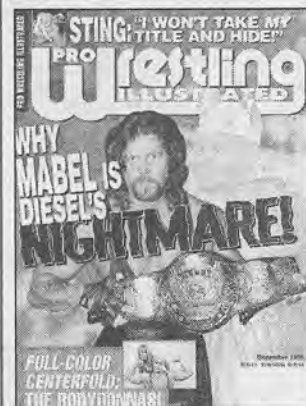
May 1995/CENTERFOLD: Sting. **Diesel**, Savage, Sabu, Hogan-Beefcake, Vader, Owen Hart.

July 1995/CENTERFOLD: Bam Bam Bigelow. **Hulk Hogan**, Sullivan, USWA blood, Yokozuna, revitalize the WWF.

August 1995/CENTERFOLD: Big Van Vader. **Women In Wrestling**, Rottens, Sting-Hogan, Road Warriors.

October 1995/CENTERFOLD: Harlem Heat. **Razor Ramon**, ideal WWF champ, Flair, Savage, Orndorff.

November 1995/CENTERFOLD: Hulk Hogan. **Summerslam**, Vader, Michaels, Backlund, North Korea, ECW rules.



December 1995/CENTERFOLD: Bodydonnas. **Diesel-Mabel**, Sting, Yokozuna, Savio, Regal-Eaton, Lawler-LeDuc.

January 1996/CENTERFOLD: Arn Anderson. **WWF vs. WCW**, Diesel & Shawn, Luger, Summerslam.

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Scouting report

HOMETOWN: Columbia, GA
HEIGHT: 5'11"
WEIGHT: 230
YEARS PRO: 11
RATING: No. 107 ("PWI 500")
STRENGTHS:

- Rested and rejuvenated. Just getting the chance to compete in the WWF again has his juices flowing.
- Rocker Dropper. Is over the trauma of Chuck Austin paralysis incident, uses finisher effectively again.
- Young veteran. Still in physical prime, yet already so experienced.

WEAKNESSES:

- Unrealistic. Has trouble accepting fact that in the WWF, even star wrestlers lose their share of bouts.
- Bulk. Added muscle has decreased the effectiveness of aerial moves.
- Stuck in Shawn's shadow. Eats at him that former partner Michaels has had better solo career.

OTHER COMMENTS: Much of his career has revolved around Michaels ... They won the AWA World tag title together twice in 1987 before jumping to the WWF ... Never won the WWF tag belts and wound up feuding with each other ... Jannetty won the I-C belt from Shawn in May '93, then lost it back to him three weeks later ... Wrestled a few times in ECW in '95; also won the Midwest Territorial Wrestling heavyweight title last year.

OUTLOOK FOR 1996: There doesn't seem to be any reason why Jannetty couldn't again climb near the top of the WWF. He's still in excellent shape, but he struggles against larger foes. It was disappointing to see him get dominated in a feud with The Kid, a man with whom he once held the WWF tag title, in late-'95. Kid is one wrestler Jannetty ought to excel against. It might be in his best interest to find a regular partner and pursue the WWF tag title again.

MARTY JANNETTY



LEX LUGER



HOMETOWN: Chicago, IL
HEIGHT: 6'5"
WEIGHT: 265
YEARS PRO: 10
RATING: No. 23 ("PWI 500")
STRENGTHS:

- Refocused. Return to WCW gave him chance to get a fresh start.
- "Rack" is back. Once again, he's using it consistently and viciously.
- Style suits him. The way he wrestles, he almost has to be a rulebreaker to do well over the long haul.

WEAKNESSES:

- Confused. Doesn't know his best friend is, Sting or Jimmy Hart.
- Gym rat. Pumping iron is fine, but how about doing more sparring and working on new moves?
- Aching arm. Steel plate inserted after motorcycle accident can be weapon, but it still gets stiff now and then.

OTHER COMMENTS: Still hearing that same haunting criticism: Shouldn't a man with your skills have won more than one world title by now? ... Won that one world title (WCW's) by beating Barry Windham in 1990 ... Former member of The Four Horsemen ... Has been managed by Harley Race, Bobby Heenan, and now Jimmy Hart ... Nearly had his career ended in a motorcycle accident in 1992 ... Stint in the WWF that ended this summer was disappointing overall.

OUTLOOK FOR 1996: Luger does seem to be wrestling with renewed vigor now that he's back to rulebreaking, but we've said that before, then watched as he started to fizzle. Right now, he is definitely in the middle of the World title picture in WCW, and he should remain there throughout '96. If he's smart and picks his feuds wisely, he has an excellent chance of winning that World title in the next 12 months.

HOMETOWN: Knoxville, TN
HEIGHT: 6'7"
WEIGHT: 345
YEARS PRO: 1
RATING: No. 103 ("PWI 500")
STRENGTHS:

- Leg strength. Even basic kicks pack plenty of power.
- Good student. Learned from Lawler in WWF, Snow in SMW.
- Fine finisher. Legdrop administered to opponent draped over top rope is devastating.

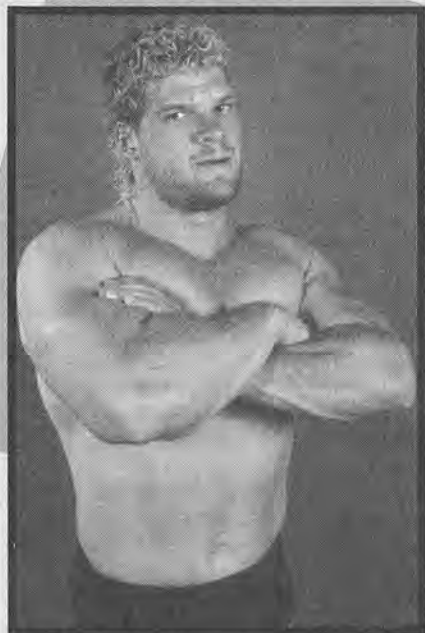
WEAKNESSES:

- Lacks career drive. Knows if he fails in wrestling, there's always dentistry.
- Hart problems. Lost confidence after being humbled by Bret.
- Underdeveloped. Upper body strength is surprisingly lacking for a man his size.

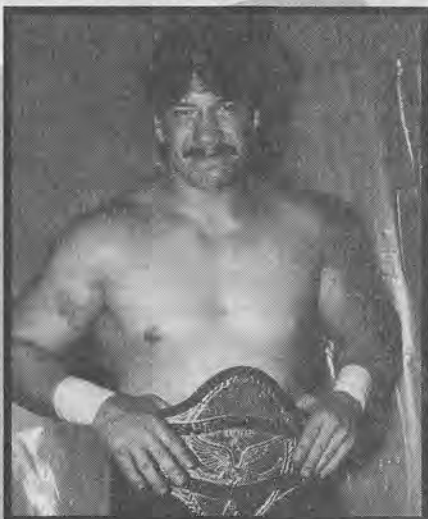
OTHER COMMENTS: Though he looks a lot like him, Yankem is not related to "Psycho" Sid Vicious ... Won the Smoky Mountain tag team title with Al Snow in April 1995 ... Has also competed as Glen Jacobs ... Was summoned to the WWF by Jerry Lawler in June '95 after Lawler lost a "kiss-my-foot" match to Bret Hart ... Despite Lawler's interference, he was never able to beat Hart ... The scariest dentist you'll ever see!

OUTLOOK FOR 1996: It's very hard to say at this point. Yankem gambled by targeting "The Hitman" in his first WWF feud. Had he been more effective in that feud, he would have been in position to make a run at either the World or Intercontinental title. He didn't, though, so now he is back near the bottom of the WWF heap. He'd probably be better off ditching Lawler; either way, '96 figures to be a rebuilding year for Yankem.

ISAAC YANKEM



EDDY GUERRERO



HOMETOWN: Los Angeles, CA
HEIGHT: 5'8"
WEIGHT: 231
YEARS PRO: 8
RATING: No. 17 ("PWI 500")

STRENGTHS:

- Ultra adaptable. Is comfortable wrestling just about any style and at any pace.
- Frog splash. Gets "Superfly"-like height on this phenomenal finisher.
- Guerrero pride. Maintaining the family tradition of excellence is more than enough to motivate him.

WEAKNESSES:

- Too good for own good. Some potential foes avoid him because they are afraid they'll look bad against.
- Hype, hype, hype. After reading great press clippings about himself, he sometimes thinks he can't lose.
- Machismo. Mistakenly believes he's good enough to trade punches with top brawlers.

OTHER COMMENTS: Truly an international sensation, Guerrero has shined in the U.S., Mexico, and Japan ... Son of former wrestler Gory Guerrero, Eddy has three brothers who are involved in the sport ... Former tag team partner of Art Barr in AAA ... Held the ECW TV title twice in '95 before joining WCW in September ... Series of matches with Dean Malenko was nothing short of spectacular to see ... Top-notch counterwrestler.

OUTLOOK FOR 1996: It has probably been said about too many wrestlers, but 1996 should be his year. Guerrero made the transition from ECW to WCW as smoothly as anyone could have. He may be the best all-around athlete in WCW right now. That one thing, however, might stand in his way of winning a title in WCW: None of the elite WCW wrestlers seem to want to wrestle him. Maybe they have reason to be hesitant, but we hope to see Hogan-Guerrero, Savage-Guerrero, or Sting-Guerrero soon.

HOMETOWN: Marietta, GA
HEIGHT: 6'4"
WEIGHT: 240
YEARS PRO: 3
RATING: No. 140 ("PWI 500")
STRENGTHS:

- Unpredictable. Always on the attack, usually from all different angles.
- Marathon man. Trains hard, so he's at his best in long matches.
- Motivated. Knows if he can dominate Jarrett feud, he'll be considered among wrestling's elite.

WEAKNESSES:

- Sleeper obsession. Hold rarely works, and it leaves him vulnerable to counters.
- Poor comeback wrestler. Once he loses momentum, confidence wanes in a hurry.
- Family feuds. Too concerned with defending the Armstrong name, not concerned enough about own career.

OTHER COMMENTS: This youngest member of the Armstrong wrestling clan has also wrestled as Brian Armstrong and The Roadie (Jeff Jarrett's WWF sidekick) ... Participated in Operation Desert Storm ... His interference was instrumental in Jarrett's winning the WWF Intercontinental title three times ... Split with Jarrett after "Double-J" lost the I-C title in July, and is now feuding with him in the USWA.

OUTLOOK FOR 1996: That depends. Jarrett reportedly worked out his differences with the WWF and should be back early in the new year. If Armstrong chooses to follow him, he might struggle for at least a while against the top competition there. If he stays in the USWA, he has the skills to be a dominant force. We hope he chooses the first option. With a little more experience, he could be exceptional. He showed a ton of promise in the WWF in the few matches he wrestled there in '95.

JESSE JAMES ARMSTRONG

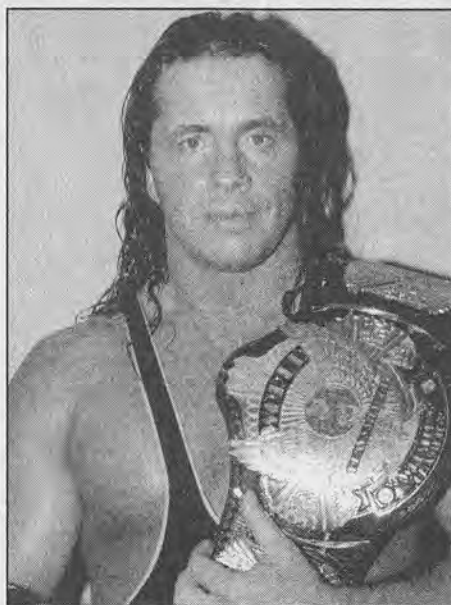


PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

TOP 10

- 1 BRET HART**
235, Calgary, Alberta
(2) WWF World champion
- 2 RANDY SAVAGE**
237, Sarasota, FL
(1) WCW World champion
- 3 DAVEY BOY SMITH**
245, Leeds, England
(-) No. 2 contender: WWF World title
- 4 THE GIANT**
430, parts unknown
(-) No. 2 contender: WCW World title
- 5 THE UNDERTAKER**
328, parts unknown
(4) No. 4 contender: WWF World title
- 6 STING**
260, Venice Beach, CA
(9) No. 5 contender: WCW World title
- 7 RAZOR RAMON**
290, Miami, FL
(5) WWF Intercontinental champion
- 8 JOHNNY B. BADD**
235, Macon, GA
(10) WCW TV champion
- 9 DIESEL**
356, Las Vegas, NV
(7) No. 3 contender: WWF World title
- 10 HULK HOGAN**
275, Venice Beach, CA
(3) No. 3 contender: WCW World title

PWI's Top 10



Bret Hart

TAG TEAMS

- 1 THE SMOKIN' GUNNS**
Combined weight: 465 pounds
(1) WWF World tag team champions
- 2 HARLEM HEAT**
Combined weight: 550 pounds
(2) WCW World tag team champions
- 3 OWEN HART & YOKOZUNA**
Combined weight: 795 pounds
(3) No. 1 contenders: WWF World tag title
- 4 J. J. ARMSTRONG & TRACEY SMOTHERS**
Combined weight: 467 pounds
(5) USWA tag team champions
- 5 THE KID & SID VICIOUS**
Combined weight: 530 pounds
(-) No. 2 contenders: WWF World tag title
- 6 THE SANDMAN & 2 COLD SCORPIO**
Combined weight: 466 pounds
(8) ECW tag team champions
- 7 PUBLIC ENEMY**
Combined weight: 583 pounds
(10) No. 1 contenders: ECW tag title
- 8 PG-13**
Combined weight: 471 pounds
(6) No. 1 contenders: USWA tag title
- 9 RAZOR RAMON & SAVIO VEGA**
Combined weight: 547 pounds
(-) No. 3 contenders: WWF World tag title
- 10 MARCUS BAGWELL & SCOTTY RIGGS**
Combined weight: 464 pounds
(-) No. 1 contenders: WCW World tag title

WCW

World Champion:
RANDY SAVAGE

(C) 237, Sarasota, FL

- 1—KENSUKE SASAKI**
(1) 233, Tokyo, Japan
- 2—THE GIANT**
(6) 430, parts unknown
- 3—HULK HOGAN**
(2) 275, Venice Beach, CA
- 4—JOHNNY B. BADD**
(4) 235, Macon, GA
- 5—STING**
(5) 260, Venice Beach, CA
- 6—LEX LUGER**
(3) 265, Chicago, IL
- 7—RIC FLAIR**
(8) 243, Minneapolis, MN
- 8—EDDY GUERRERO**
(-) 221, Los Angeles, CA
- 9—BRIAN PILLMAN**
(-) 226, Cincinnati, OH
- 10—DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE**
(9) 260, Tampa, FL

WWF

World Champion:
BRET HART

(C) 235, Calgary, Alberta

- 1—RAZOR RAMON**
(1) 290, Miami, FL
- 2—DAVEY BOY SMITH**
(4) 245, Leeds, England
- 3—DIESEL**
(3) 356, Las Vegas, NV
- 4—THE UNDERTAKER**
(2) 328, parts unknown
- 5—BUDDY LANDELL**
(-) 236, Los Angeles, CA
- 6—AHMED JOHNSON**
(7) 255, Pearl River, MS
- 7—JEFF JARRETT**
(-) 230, Nashville, TN
- 8—GOLDUST**
(8) 254, Austin, TX
- 9—YOKOZUNA**
(-) 589, Samoa
- 10—SAVIO VEGA**
(9) 260, Vega Alta, Puerto Rico

USWA

USWA Champion:
JEFF JARRETT

(4) 230, Nashville, TN

- 1—TEX SLAZENGER**
(5) 253, Austin, TX
- 2—AHMED JOHNSON**
(C) 255, Pearl River, MS
- 3—J. J. ARMSTRONG**
(3) 240, Marietta, GA
- 4—BRIAN CHRISTOPHER**
(1) 230, Memphis, TN
- 5—TRACEY SMOTHERS**
(10) 227, Atlanta, GA
- 6—STEVEN DUNN**
(6) 240, Tampa, FL
- 7—MOONDOG CUJO**
(8) 301, parts unknown
- 8—DOUG GILBERT**
(9) 241, Lexington, TN
- 9—TOMMY RICH**
(-) 248, Hendersonville, TN
- 10—KOKO B. WARE**
(-) 229, Union City, TN

ECW

ECW Champion:
THE SANDMAN

(3) 244, Philadelphia, PA

- 1—TOMMY DREAMER**
(4) 245, Yonkers, NY
- 2—2 COLD SCORPIO**
(2) 222, Denver, CO
- 3—MIKEY WHIPWRECK**
(C) 187, New York, NY
- 4—CACTUS JACK**
(-) 277, Truth or Consequences, NM
- 5—TAZ**
(-) 221, Massapequa, NY
- 6—STEVE RICHARDS**
(-) 227, Philadelphia, PA
- 7—RAVEN**
(-) 235, Short Hills, NJ
- 8—HACK MYERS**
(-) 269, Baltimore, MD
- 9—BRUISER MASTINO**
(-) 401, Omaha, NE
- 10—J.T. SMITH**
(-) 238, Philadelphia, PA

OFFICIAL RATINGS

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide telephone and arena surveys of wrestling fans and on the volume and character of mail that comes to our offices. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (-) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue, while (C) indicates the wrestler was champion in that category last issue.

MOST POPULAR

- 1 THE UNDERTAKER**
328, parts unknown
Last issue: No. 5 Most Popular
- 2 STING**
260, Venice Beach, CA
Last issue: No. 1 Most Popular
- 3 BRET HART**
235, Calgary, Alberta
Last issue: No. 2 Most Popular
- 4 RAZOR RAMON**
290, Miami, FL
Last issue: No. 7 Most Popular
- 5 HULK HOGAN**
275, Venice Beach, CA
Last issue: No. 8 Most Popular
- 6 RANDY SAVAGE**
237, Sarasota, FL
Last issue: No. 3 Most Popular
- 7 AHMED JOHNSON**
255, Pearl River, MS
Last issue: No. 6 Most Popular
- 8 SHAWN MICHAELS**
234, San Antonio, TX
Last issue: No. 4 Most Popular
- 9 JOHNNY B. BADD**
235, Macon, GA
Last issue: unrated
- 10 HENRY GODWINN**
278, Biggers, AR
Last issue: unrated

MOST HATED

- 1 THE GIANT**
430, parts unknown
Last issue: No. 1 Most Hated
- 2 THE KID**
212, Minneapolis, MN
Last issue: No. 2 Most Hated
- 3 BOB BACKLUND**
234, Princeton, MN
Last issue: unrated
- 4 JERRY LAWLER**
234, Memphis, TN
Last issue: No. 4 Most Hated
- 5 KEVIN SULLIVAN**
252, Boston, MA
Last issue: No. 6 Most Hated
- 6 RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis, MN
Last issue: No. 3 Most Hated
- 7 GOLDUST**
254, Austin, TX
Last issue: No. 5 Most Hated
- 8 JEFF JARRETT**
230, Nashville, TN
Last issue: unrated
- 9 DAVEY BOY SMITH**
245, Leeds, England
Last issue: No. 8 Most Hated
- 10 TAZ**
221, Massapequa, NY
Last issue: unrated

For period ended December 21, 1995

CUMULATIVE RATINGS

These ratings are based on the past 10 issues of this magazine. We have examined our ratings for each of these issues in our Top 10 and Tag Team categories only, and assigned each position a point value: 10 points for a first-place rating, nine for second place, and so on. The point values for all wrestlers in the past 10 issues have been compiled, with a possible maximum of 100 points. Each issue we'll present the top five finishers in each category. While our regular ratings reflect the past month, these cumulative ratings give an indication of wider trends in the sport.

SINGLES

- 1—DIESEL**.....76 points
- 2—STING**.....70 points
- 3—HULK HOGAN**.....64 points
- 4—BRET HART**.....56 points
- 5—RAZOR RAMON**.....54 points

TAG TEAMS

- 1—OWEN HART & YOKOZUNA**.....84 points
- 2—HARLEM HEAT**.....79 points
- 3—THE SMOKIN' GUNNS**.....62 points
- 4—THE NASTY BOYS**.....44 points
- 5—PG-13**.....39 points

NEW JAPAN

IWGP Champion:

- THE GREAT MUTA**
(C) 245, Tokyo, Japan
- 1—SHINYA HASHIMOTO**
(-) 287, Gisu, Japan
 - 2—KENSUKE SASAKI**
(-) 233, Tokyo, Japan
 - 3—HIRYOSHI TENZAN**
(-) 270, Tokyo, Japan
 - 4—SCOTT NORTON**
(-) 360, Minneapolis, MN
 - 5—RIKI CHOSHU**
(-) 246, Yamaguchi, Japan
 - 6—KOJI KANEMOTO**
(-) 205, Tokyo, Japan
 - 7—EL SAMURAI**
(-) 210, Tokyo, Japan
 - 8—CHRIS BENOIT**
(-) 218, Edmonton, Alberta
 - 9—JUSHIN LIGER**
(-) 206, Hiroshima, Japan
 - 10—KAZUO YAMAZAKI**
(-) 182, Tokyo, Japan

ALL-JAPAN

Triple Crown Champion:

- MITSU HARU MISAWA**
(C) 228, Saitama, Japan
- 1—TOSHIKI KAWADA**
(10) 245, Tizhigi, Japan
 - 2—KENTA KOBASHI**
(-) 261, Tokyo, Japan
 - 3—AKIRA TAUE**
(-) 265, Tokyo, Japan
 - 4—STAN HANSEN**
(-) 322, Borger, TX
 - 5—GARY ALBRIGHT**
(-) 343, Billings, MT
 - 6—JOHNNY ACE**
(-) 250, San Bernardino, CA
 - 7—THE PATRIOT**
(-) 251, Columbia, SC
 - 8—YOSHINARI OGAWA**
(-) 202, Fichigi, Japan
 - 9—DAN KROFFAT**
(-) 235, Montreal, Quebec
 - 10—DOUG FURNAS**
(-) 243, Commerce, OK

AAA: AAA Champion—Perro Aguayo; 1—Konnan; 2—Cien Caras; 3—Rey Misterio Jr.; 4—Psicosis; 5—Winners; 6—Jerry Estrada; 7—Octagon; 8—La Parka; 9—Heavy Metal; 10—El Hijo Del Santo.

ACW: ACW Champion—T. Rantala; 1—Virgil; 2—Tito Santana; 3—Johnny Gunn; 4—Rick Martel; 5—Johnny Graham; 6—Mr. Hughes; 7—Lord Zoltan; 8—Ubas; 9—Mikey Whipwreck; 10—Glenn Osbourne.

IWCCW: IWCCW Champion—Greg Valentine; 1—Rick Martel; 2—Tito Santana; 3—Scott Putski; 4—Tony Atlas; 5—Johnny Gunn; 6—Metal Maniac; 7—Bastion Booger; 8—Jimmy Snuka; 9—Koko B. Ware; 10—Joe Savoldi.

MTW: MTW Champion—Title Vacant; 1—Bruiser Bedlam; 2—D-La Brown; 3—Brad Armstrong; 4—Bobo Brazil Jr.; 5—Rock Stevens; 6—J.T. Lightning; 7—Chris Carter; 8—Johnny Paradise; 9—Machine Gun Kelly; 10—Ray Roberts.

PCW: PCW Champion—Akita Kaos; 1—Skip; 2—Mark Mest; 3—Reckless Youth; 4—Ray Odyssey; 5—Ubas; 6—D-La Brown; 7—The Midnight Rocker; 8—Johnny Graham; 9—Jimmy Deo; 10—Boo Bradley.

PWA: PWA Champion—The Hater; 1—J.B. Trask; 2—Horace the Psychopath; 3—Lenny Lane; 4—Charlie Norris; 5—Blacktop Bully; 6—Nailz; 7—The Mangler; 8—Dan Jessor; 9—Kamikaze Kid; 10—Jesse Hennig.

PWF: PWF Champion—Austin Steele; 1—George South; 2—Italian Stallion; 3—Tyrone Knox; 4—Cruel Connection II; 5—Madd Maxxine; 6—Star Ryder; 7—Flaming Youth; 8—Randy Sledge; 9—Terry Austin; 10—Russian Assassin II.

WWA: WWA Champion—Jim McPherson; 1—Chris Evans; 2—Ed Atlas; 3—Frank Finnegan; 4—Jimmy Snuka; 5—Metal Maniac; 6—Chuck Sloan; 7—Gino Caruso; 8—Gus the Greek; 9—John Rotten; 10—Akita Kaos.

RATINGS ANALYSIS

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating over 200 wrestlers in 19 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.

The Japanese invasion. Just a few months after stars from New Japan began invading WCW en masse, stars from New Japan and All-Japan have invaded our ratings en masse. Let us explain:

The demise of Smoky Mountain Wrestling (you can read about it in detail in the "Press Conference" with former SMW Commissioner **Bob Armstrong** on page 22) left a major hole in our ratings section. We seriously considered putting a number of different organizations in Smoky's old slot, but in the end, we decided to make two changes in the ratings format. Many readers have written to tell us how much they liked the addition of the International category, which included mostly wrestlers from Japan and Mexico, to our ratings section in late-1994.

So what we decided to do starting with this issue is split the International ratings into one top 10 for New Japan and one for All-Japan. The top spot in New Japan will be reserved for the IWGP heavyweight champion, which at press time was **The Great Muta**. Other regulars in New Japan include **Jushin Liger**, **Koji Kanemoto**, and **Sabu**.

The top All-Japan spot will be reserved for the Triple Crown champ. At press time, that trio of titles was held by **Mitsuharu Misawa**. Other All-Japan regulars include **Toshiaki Kawada** and **Stan Hansen**.

This 'n' that ... The Undertaker has a firm hold on a spot in our overall top 10 this month even though his recent win-loss record hasn't been all that good. Most of the ghoulish one's recent matches have been against WWF World champion **Bret Hart**, and all of them have ended without a decisive finish.

Actually, Undertaker has dominated most of the matches, only to see his chance to win his second WWF title taken away by the interference of wrestlers such as **Diesel**, **Davey Boy Smith**, **Owen Hart**, and **Yokozuna**.

Because those men have been attacking Hart, referees have disqualified Undertaker because, technically, he is benefiting from the interference, even if he does despise the men who interfere "on his behalf." And it is clear that he does despise them, because he has been quick to help Bret chase the rulebreakers away. This fall, **Paul**



The Undertaker

Bearer, 'Taker's manager, stormed into WWF President **Gorilla Monsoon's** office to ask why his man hadn't had a World title match in nearly two years.

Bearer succeeded in getting Undertaker World title matches; now he needs to get his man fair title matches with no interference, because it's clear the man from the dark side has what it takes to be World champ again.

Look for **Public Enemy** to climb higher in our tag team top 10—and maybe even to the top spot—during the first half of 1996. They signed with WCW in early-December and were set to make their federation debut sometime in January.

Rocco Rock and **Johnny Grunge** won the ECW tag team title four times during their 2½-year tenure in that promotion. They tried their luck in the WWF for one match, against **The Smokin' Gunns** at the dark match at Survivor Series '95, but apparently got a deal more to their liking in WCW. We all know they can outbrawl just about any team. Maybe in WCW, we'll find out more about their overall wrestling skills.

Why no **Jerry Lawler** in the USWA rankings, you ask? Simple. It's because he broke his fibula in a match with two-time former Smoky Mountain heavyweight champion **Brad Armstrong** in November. SMW might be dead, but that doesn't mean the promotion's former stars can't continue to cause trouble for people in the USWA. The injury isn't as serious as it might sound, though. "The King" was able to walk with only a slight limp shortly after the injury occurred and wasn't expecting to be on the injury list for very long. He said he still planned to be challenging USWA champ **Ahmed Johnson** again early in 1996.



Jerry Lawler

Finally, expect **Jeff Jarrett** to re-enter the WWF ratings during the first few months of '96. Just before press time, we learned that he had worked out his differences with the WWF and would be on his way back soon.

Until next month ... If you have any comments regarding our ratings, write to us at: "Ratings Analysis," c/o PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED, Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034. □

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Code	Artist								
8361	10,000 Maniacs	2761	Crosby, Stills, Nash	4683	Hothouse Flowers	9682	Neil Young	7621	Smashing Pumpkins
4661	4 Non Blondes	2765	Crowded House	4631	Indigo Girls	6352	Nelson	7643	Smithereens
2231	AC/DC	2791	Cry of Love	4691	INXS	6393	New Order	7661	Sonic Youth
2371	Aerosmith	2853	The Cult	2768	Jackson Browne	6461	Nine Inch Nails	7683	Soul Asylum
6261	Aimee Mann	2871	The Cure	5224	Jackyl	6471	Nirvana	7682	Soundgarden
2664	Alice Cooper	3261	Damn Yankees	8291	James Taylor	6722	NRBQ	7746	Spin Doctors
2541	Alice in Chains	3262	Danger Danger	5261	Jane's Addiction	6723	Ozzy Osbourne	7181	Squeeze
2551	Allman Bros.	3265	Danzig	4272	Jerry Garcia Band	7263	Pantera	8242	Steve Vai
2681	Anthrax	2691	David Bowie	5371	Jesus Jones	7692	Patty Smyth	6421	Stevie Nicks
2527	B-52s	7681	David Lee Roth	5385	Jethro Tull	7463	Paul Simon	7842	Sting
2233	Bad Company	3332	Deep Purple	2831	Jimmy Buffett	6221	Paul McCartney	7863	Stone Temple Pilots
2323	Beatles	3331	Def Leppard	7282	Joe Satriani	9373	Paul Westerberg	7834	Suede
2325	Beck	3371	Depeche Mode	6351	John Mellencamp	7321	Pearl Jam	7841	Suicidal Tendencies
2352	Belly	3461	Dinosaur Jr.	5831	Judas Priest	4221	Peter Gabriel	7862	Sundays
2381	Beverly Hills 90210	3462	Dio	4282	Juliana Hatfield	3722	Peter Dinklage	8341	Suzanne Vega
2444	Big Head Todd/Monsters	3472	Dire Straits	5262	Kansas	7441	Phish	8251	Talking Heads
4361	Billy Idol	3733	Dream Theater	5461	King's X	7462	Pink Floyd	8321	Tears For Fears
5632	Billy Joel	3871	Duran Duran	5462	The Kinks	7641	Poison	6841	Ted Nugent
2523	Black Crowes	3242	The Eagles	5472	KISS	7671	Porno For Pyros	8371	Tesla
2524	Black Sabbath	2741	Edie Brickell	5332	Led Zeppelin	7745	Primus	8372	Testament
2544	Blind Melon	5641	Elton John	5366	Lemonheads	7762	Prong	8432	The The
3951	Bob Dylan	2671	Elvis Costello	5721	Lenny Kravitz	1831	Queen	7381	Tom Petty
2661	Bon Jovi	3681	Enuff Z'Nuff	5451	Lillian Axe	1832	Queensryche	2622	Tom Cochrane
2662	Bonham	5642	Eric Johnson	3671	Lita Ford	7363	R.E.M.	8662	Tool
2731	Breeders	2525	Eric Clapton	5484	Live	7232	Radiohead	8741	Trixxter Fan Club
2769	Brother Cane	3981	Extreme	5962	Lynch Mob	7265	Ramones	8221	U2
4673	Bruce Hornsby	3241	Faith No More	7931	Matthew Sweet	7283	RATT	8241	UB40
7771	Bruce Springsteen	3442	Fight	6322	Meat Loaf	7332	Red Hot Chili Peppers	8451	Ugly Kid Joe
2321	Bryan Adams	3471	Firehouse	6241	Megadeth	6273	Richard Marx	8743	Urge Overkill
2852	Bulletboys	3531	Fleetwood Mac	3841	Melissa Etheridge	7521	Robert Plant	8262	Van Halen
2881	Butthole Surfers	3673	Foreigner	6382	Metallica	7832	Rod Stewart	6341	Vince Neil
9433	Catherine Wheel	4362	Genesis	2651	Michael Bolton	7651	Rolling Stones	8461	Violent Femmes
9431	Cheryl Wheeler	8462	George Thorogood	6431	Midnight Oil	7652	Rollins Band	9271	W.A.S.P.
2461	Cinderella	4461	Gin Blossoms	6443	Mighty M. Bosstones	7871	Rush	9272	Warrant
2656	Collective Soul	4721	Grateful Dead	6463	Ministry	7223	Sacred Reich	9441	White Zombie
2663	Concrete Blonde	4731	Great White	6252	Mitch Malloy	7261	Santana	9463	The Who
2683	Counting Crows	4737	Green Day	6672	Morrissey	7374	Sepultura	9454	Wilson Phillips
2682	Coverdale/Page	4735	Green Jelly	6682	Motley Crue	6262	Sinead O'Connor	9671	World Party
2693	Cowboy Junkies	4861	Guns N' Roses	6681	Motorhead	7541	Skid Row	9371	Yes
2726	Cracker	4274	Hardline	6721	Mr. Big	7523	Slaughter	6251	Yngwie Malmsteen
2723	Cranberries	4321	Heart	6331	Ned's Atomic Dustbin	7524	Slayer	1181	ZZ Top

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WITNESS TAMPERING IN McMAHON STEROID TRIAL?

WWF Head Outraged By New York Post Reports

By STU SAKS

NEW YORK—An investigation is being conducted by federal prosecutors and the FBI regarding the possibility that there was witness tampering prior to the 1994 Vince McMahon steroid trial, the *New York Post* reported on November 22.

According to unnamed sources of the story's authors, Phil Mushnick and Jack Newfield, investigators are trying to ascertain whether freelance TV producer Martin Bergman attempted to influence witnesses by offering "consultant" money for a TV piece he would be producing on the case. Bergman is the husband of Laura Brevetti, one of the lawyers who represented McMahon when he was acquitted of steroid distribution charges.

McMahon responded to the story by reading a four-minute statement on a broadcast of *WWF Superstars* on a

New York TV station. Included were the following statements:

"I deeply resent any innuendo or accusation that my acquittal on the charges brought against me by the federal government was in any way tainted by any illegality by me or my legal representative.

"These same yellow journalists who had to eat crow for telling lies are once again ... trying to drum up support for their own personal agenda ... attempting to perpetuate some theory of witness tampering ... That postulation is just about as farfetched as the charges brought against me in the first place. The jury did not believe you then, so why should the public believe you now?"

Vince McMahon was furious when he read reports that there may have been witness tampering before his 1994 steroid distribution trial. He responded on a WWF broadcast.



Sandman Regains ECW Belt

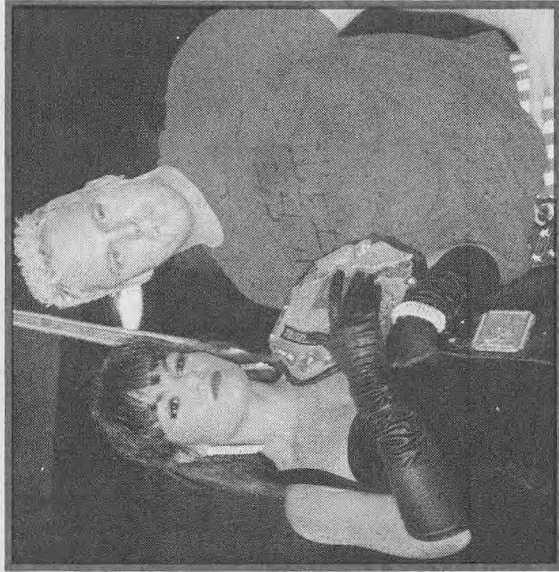
By DAVE LENKER

PHILADELPHIA—The Sandman became the first-ever three-time ECW heavyweight champion when he defeated previous champion Mikey Whipwreck and Steve Austin in a triangle match on December 9.

Austin didn't have much trouble eliminating Whipwreck, but he seemed to make a big mistake by trying to brawl with Sandman instead of trying to outwrestle him once Whipwreck was out. At one point when he had Sandman down, Austin drank some beer and spat in Sandman's face. Sandman made a comeback seconds later after Woman, his manager, poured beer into his mouth.

But Austin took his opponent's best punches, then used brass knuckles to kayo him. Sandman, however, draped his leg over the bottom rope after Austin got a two-count. Later, Woman put the knuckles on Sandman's hand, and he scored the pin after kayoing Austin. Austin was furious afterward, because replays showed his foot was on the ropes during the pinfall.

"A ripoff ... plain and simple, a ripoff!" he said.



The Sandman won the ECW heavyweight title for an unprecedented third time in December. As usual, Woman, his manager, was instrumental in the victory.

Page Begg Doll To Leave Badd

By ANDY RODRIGUEZ

ATLANTA—"Diamond" Dallas Page just hasn't been the same since he lost the managerial services of Kimberly, The Diamond Doll, to Johnny B. Badd at World War III. Friends say Page has been very depressed and has sent flowers and notes to Doll saying he'll do anything to get her back.

According to one rumor, Kimberly did agree to have lunch with Page at an Atlanta restaurant, but she slapped him and stormed out of the establishment just minutes after sitting down at the table. Page denied that the meeting ever took place.

"My private life is nobody else's damn business but mine," he said. "I'll get her back again. I'll win her over. Johnny B. Badd is trying to poison her mind against me. I've got a few surprises planned for him. I've got a plan!"

Kimberly said she was "very, very happy" with Badd and didn't want to talk about DDP.

Jerry Jarrett Set For His Return To Ring

By LIZ HUNTER

MEMPHIS—The Tennessee wars between the stars of the USWA and the stars of now-defunct Smoky Mountain Wrestling just keep getting stranger. First Jeff Jarrett returned to wrestling after almost four months of inactivity to defend the honor of the USWA against his old Roadie, Jesse James Armstrong. Now his father, Jerry, the head promoter of the USWA, has returned to the ring to battle men such as Bob Armstrong.

"This is not a full-time comeback," Jerry Jarrett said. "This is about pride. The Armstrong family has got to be sent out of town for good, no matter what it takes. If it means me gettin' in the ring a few times, fine. I'll take my licks. Even when you've been retired a while, you don't just forget how to wrestle."

"I think my dad looks great in there," said Jeff Jarrett. "I'm glad I'm on his side in this one."

AROUND THE GLOBE

TOKYO, JAPAN

New Japan promoters were very reluctant to sign the January 4 Big Van Vader-Antonio Inoki match. The 52-year-old Japanese legend has beaten WCW mainstays Lord Steven Regal, Sting, and Ric Flair during the last three years, but he has never faced anyone like Vader. "Everyone tried to talk Inoki out of it," said one promoter, "but he insisted he could win."

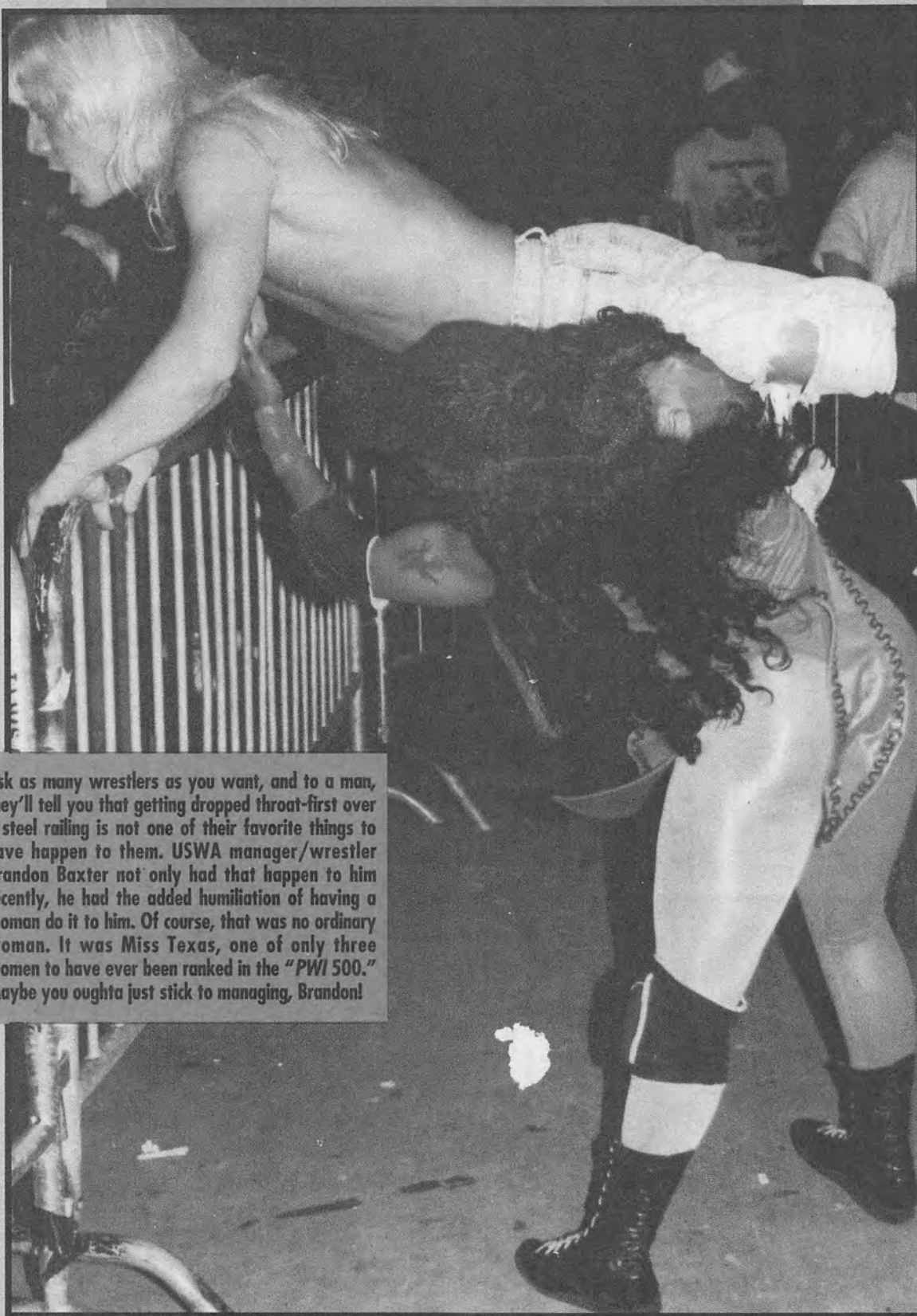
SAN HERMAN, PUERTO RICO

Quite an interesting mini-feud brewing in Puerto Rico this winter. Mabel traveled down to the island in hopes of winning the WWC Universal title from the legendary Carlos Colon. Mabel said he had wrestled Colon when he was a rookie and at that time Colon did everything he could to make him look bad. So far, the best Mabel has been able to do against Colon is a double-countout.

OSHAWA, ONTARIO

Bob Backlund may be attracting a lot of attention again by chicken-winging practically anyone who looks at him funny, but his win-loss record has hardly been great lately. He was cleanly pinned by Savio Vega at a card here, but he did get some satisfaction by chicken-winging Vega afterward.

HOT SHOT



Ask as many wrestlers as you want, and to a man, they'll tell you that getting dropped throat-first over a steel railing is not one of their favorite things to have happen to them. USWA manager/wrestler Brandon Baxter not only had that happen to him recently, he had the added humiliation of having a woman do it to him. Of course, that was no ordinary woman. It was Miss Texas, one of only three women to have ever been ranked in the "PWI 500." Maybe you oughta just stick to managing, Brandon!

Photo by Erick Anderson

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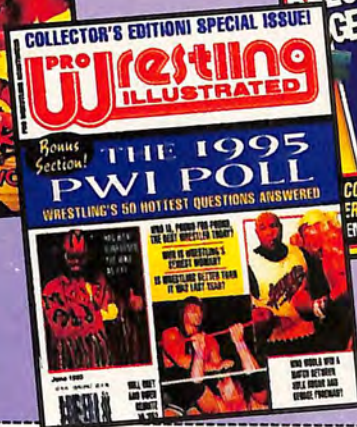
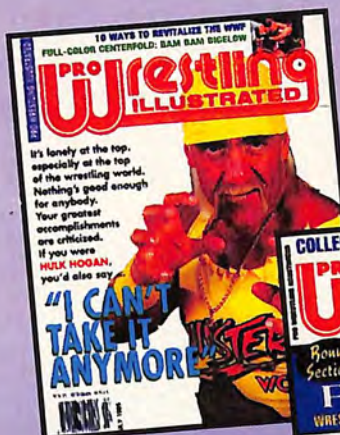
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